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BEDD GELERT

ITS FACTS, FAIRIES, AND FOLK-LORE

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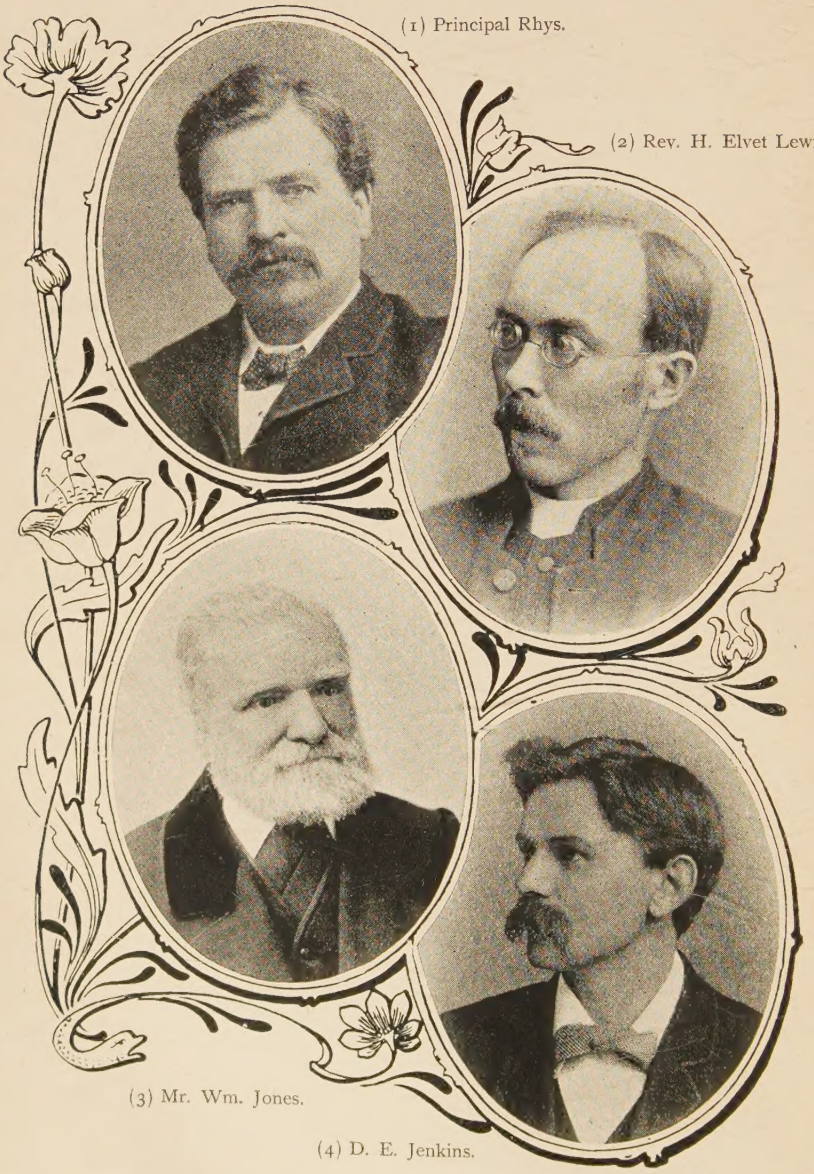

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BEDD GELERT

ITS FACTS, FAIRIES, & FOLK-LORE

BY

D. E. JENKINS

PORTMADOC

EDITOR OF 'CYFRES IEUENCTID CYMRU,' 'CYFRES EFRYDWYR CYMRU,' ETC.

WITH TRANSLATIONS OF POETRY BY

THE REV. H. ELVET LEWIS, LONDON

AND AN INTRODUCTION BY

PRINCIPAL JOHN RHYS, M.A., LL.D.,

JESUS COLLEGE, OXFORD

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PREFACE

This work is based upon the articles by Mr. William Jones (*Bleddyn*) in *Y Brython*, 1861, which, together with his essay on "The Folk-Lore of Carnarvonshire," the present writer has secured for the purpose of giving the English reader an idea of what the inhabitants of this district associate with their homes. Mr. Jones's essay on "The Antiquities and Folk-Lore of Bedd Gelert" shared the prize with that of the late Rev. Owen Wynne Jones (*Glasynys*) at the well-known Eisteddfod of Bedd Gelert in 1860. The serial appearance of that essay brought Mr. Jones a reputation, which he has never lost, as one of the best of our antiquarians and folk-lorists. In 1861 he won the prize at the Conwy National Eisteddfod for an essay on "Conwy and its Neighbourhood": and in 1862 was adjudged equal with an English writer on "The Geology of Carnarvonshire," and the appearance of that essay in 1863 showed him to be a master of his subject. Though well known as a writer, he is but little known personally, and readers will be glad of the two portraits given of him in this volume. He was born at Bedd Gelert in 1829, and is the eldest son of John Jones, so much associated with Kingsley's visits. In 1841 he was apprenticed to a draper at Carnarvon, from where he went to Llangollen. He was there married, and, not long afterwards, removed to Portmadoc. In the early part of 1862 he returned to Llangollen, where he now lives, a venerable old man of seventy years, suffering from an acute stroke of paralysis. He has spent his life behind a draper's counter, but has managed to the last to keep alive a

keen interest in all matters pertaining to antiquities and folk-lore. Here is a deserving case for a Government pension.

The present volume contains most of the material contained in Mr. Jones's articles, used up independently and re-arranged. But a great deal has been collected at first hand from the inhabitants, and much has been taken from books and periodicals written during late years. Care has been taken to give the source from which printed matter has been used. The text speaks in the first personal pronoun plural (1) in order to avoid the continual need of defining Mr. Jones's material and my own—a matter of little importance to the English reader, and easily settled by the Welsh reader by a reference to the *Brython*; (2) to include Mr. John McKay, who has travelled every inch of the district with me, and who has sat many an hour listening to conversations in the vernacular with as much patience as if he understood every word. His intelligent interest in the collecting of materials for this work has been of more value to me than I can easily estimate. Who can imagine the delight we have had among these glorious hills, the kindness we have received at the hands of the people, and the desire we have that others might experience the same. I have studiously avoided embellishing the anecdotes and folk-lore collected here, and may have erred in some places by giving too literal a rendering of the original matter. Nearly all the photos without the artist's name are by Mr. J. Aber Jones.

The following friends are thanked for their kindness in various ways:—Principal Roberts; Professors Angus and Anwyl, and the Librarian, Aberystwyth College; Professor Lloyd, Bangor; the Rev. W. J. Dawson; Messrs. O. M. Edwards, M.P.; S. M. Jones, Carnarvon; J. Aber Jones, and several photographers, and a number of friends who have so readily lent me books. I wish to make special mention of my obligations to the Rev. H. Elvet Lewis and Principal John Rhys.

D. E. J.

PORTMADOC, 22*nd June* 1899.

INTRODUCTION

The author of this volume one day, some time ago, wrote to me that he was anxious to do something for Mr. William Jones, the antiquary of Bedd Gelert, and to do that something in a way that would help to give a permanent form to the information which Mr. Jones had collected in Welsh about his native parish. I am myself deeply indebted to Mr. Jones, as any one may find who will take the trouble to glance at my contribution of "Welsh Fairy Tales" to the fifth volume of the *Cymmrodor*, especially pp. 49-76. So when Mr. Jenkins wrote later that he was getting ready for publication a volume embracing Mr. Jones's materials, and asked me to help him by writing an Introduction, I had no hesitation in giving my consent. That is how I came to promise an Introduction to Mr. Jenkins's chapters. I may add that I have never had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of either Mr. Jenkins or Mr. Jones: my interest in the work is wholly of the antiquarian kind, and my responsibility is confined to the Introduction, and I feel it all the harder to make up my mind to what it should be devoted. Had it been a book of my own I should not have a moment's hesitation: it would have been devoted to nothing in particular, drawn out at such a length as would just satisfy the publisher.

In perusing the sheets I was convinced, among other things, that the student of folk-lore should sit down to the book and carefully note the items which it contains of interest to him, and that the archæologist should do likewise. For the latter will find in it a good many references to sites which

call for digging and careful examination, sites which the casual visitor to Bedd Gelert is not likely to discover for himself, but which are here clearly indicated by information derived from men who know, so to say, every inch of the ground. Perhaps in no district in Wales and its marches has the Cambrian Archæological Association done so little effective work. It has been my luck to join two expeditions of that body, setting out in different years, from Carnarvon, in the direction of Llanberis and the Pass, but neither of them succeeded in reaching Muriau'r Dref. How much longer is that deserted centre of the ancient Goidel to remain unknown to archæologists who profess to be tired of redescribing well-known churches!

After thus trying to draw the attention of the folk-lorist and the antiquarian to the work, I propose to devote the rest of the space at my disposal to some promiscuous notes on certain of the many interesting place-names which occur in the author's text. In a good many instances he has rightly had the popular etymologies recorded, for though such guesses have no scientific value, they have often become part and parcel of the folk-lore of their localities, and as such they claim some notice in a work like the present. It is a commonplace of philological science that the etymology of place-names belongs to the most difficult category of questions with which it has to deal; nevertheless they are the victims on which the unskilled operator loves best to try his hand. The result would be of no great consequence had it not been for the fact that the local philologist undertakes, at any rate in Wales, to alter the names himself; and his wisdom, as it usually puts on a very grave face, is sure to be accepted by some or all of his neighbours. This is quite natural, as it usually gives expression to sentiments which they can understand and appreciate. We have a flagrant instance in the name of the valley which extends from Bedd Gelert in the direction of Pen y Gwryd. The correct pronunciation, according to the Gwyndodeg or Venedotian dialect, is *Nanhwynan*, but the spelling *Nanhoenem* in an old charter cited at page 198 of this volume seems to point to an original *Nanhoenein*, and this seems borne out

in the same by *Bryngwynem* and *Hendrefwynein*. So the personal name involved would now be *Gwynain*; and *Nanhwynain* sometimes occurs in that form. But it is characteristic of the Gwyndodeg that it makes both *ein* and *en* in such positions into *an*: hence the correct Gwynedd pronunciation is *Nanhwynan*, *Bryn Gwynan*, etc., while the spellings *Nanhwynen* and *Bryn Gwynen* occupy a sort of intermediate position between the local pronunciation and the book forms in *ain*. There are reasons to suppose that the Gwyndodic predilection for a broad *a* in the ending of words is of no recent origin. In fact, we seem to have the name *Gwynein* or *Gwynain* as *Gwynhan* in the ancient story of *Culhwch ac Olwen* in the Red Book of Hergest: I refer to the designation therein of a certain *Teithi Hen mab Gwynhan*. As I have said, Nanhwynain and Bryn Gwynain have to be regarded as the book forms, and Nanhwynan and Bryn Gwynan as the local forms; but Nant Gwynant and Bryn Gwynant are monstrosities of modern origin, partly due to the difference between Nanh-Wynan and Bryn Gwynan. The explanation, however, of that difference is a very simple matter of Welsh grammar: *nant* is feminine in the dialect, and so requires *Gwynan* to become *Wynan*; moreover, *nt* is changed into *nh*, as in *fy nhad*, "my father," for *myn + tad*. In modern Welsh there is a tendency to efface the mutations and restore

Mr. J. Aber Jones.

the radical consonants, whence Nanhwynan is made into Nant Gwynan. This, however, is a very different matter from making the personal name *Gwynan* into *Gwynant*, as if it meant some sort of a *nant*, "brook or valley." I have been told that *Gwynant* only dates from the time when an English settler built the house of Plas Gwynant, and what happened, I fancy, was this: the new comer wanted a name for his house, and he was advised to consult the philological oracle of the neighbourhood, who without any hesitation gave sage reasons why *Gwynan* must be a corruption of *Gwynant*: hence Plas *Gwynant*, and from the Plas the heresy has proceeded to attack Nanhwynan, Bryn Gwynan, and all the others involving the name of Gwynan.

How far the spelling should represent the local pronunciation is a question on which opinions differ: thus most people prefer to write Bedd Gelert, though the natural pronunciation given the word in the district is Beth Gelert, as the soft *dd* is sharpened into *th* before the consonant following. It is perhaps just as well not to say too much about *Beth Gelert*, lest it should cause a new move among the crazy people who are in quest of the Lost Tribes of Israel. The case of *Dolwyddelan* is analogous in part to that of *Bedd Gelert*; for the local pronunciation is liable to slur over the *w*, so that some of the natives say *Dolyddelan* and write *Dolyddelen* under the influence of the idea that the name consists of *Dolydd Elen*, "Helen's Dales." This fancy is upset, among other things, by the fact that the ancient manuscript of the Record of Carnarvon has the name written more than once *Doloythelan*, which undoubtedly meant *Dol Wyddelan*, "Gwyddelan's Dale." Whether that Gwyddelan may have been the same man as the saint after whom the Montgomeryshire Church of Llan Wyddelan was called I know not, or even whether he was a saint at all. At any rate there seems to be no reason whatsoever for invoking Elen Luyddog to explain the name; but it is right to explain that certain portions of Carnarvonshire have been for some time suffering acutely from an access of a sort of Helen mania derived from the old romance known as Maxen's Dream. Among other place-

names attacked is one which, in the younger days of persons still living, used to be called Pen ffordd felen, "the Yellow Road's End." I understand that it is now *Pen ffordd Elen*, "Helen's Road's End." With still greater violence *Coed Alun*, in the neighbourhood of Carnarvon, is sometimes transmogrified into *Coed Helen*, "Helen's Wood," though it was *Coed Alun* in the Mabinogion. *Coed Alun* is fortunately the name still in use among the common people; but I can easily understand how the local philologist would object to it, as he would not find Alun easy to explain. The last thing he can tolerate is a place-name which he cannot understand: it is a reflection on his omniscience, so he instinctively proceeds to get rid of it by changing it into something which he understands and can invest with a yarn of his own. If he succeeds in persuading his neighbours, it becomes folk-lore, which the parish historian has to take into account.

Mr. S. M. Jones.

That is perhaps greater consideration than should be accorded to the reckless mapsters let loose from time to time on an afflicted country. Take, for instance, him who inserts in his map of Lleyn a *Porth-Dinlleyn* instead of *Porth Dinllâen*, "the Port of Dinllâen." *Lleyn* corresponds to the Irish *Lagin*, "the Men of *Lein*ster," whereas *Dinllâen* suggests *Dún Lagen*, "the Men of *Lein*ster's *Fort*," where *Lagin* and *Lagen* are nominative and genitive respectively. It is needless to say that he who tries to perpetuate *Dinlleyn* not only offers unpardonable violence to the actual pronunciation of *Dinllâ-en*, but does his utmost to efface one of the few traces left us of the ancient landmarks of the Goidel in Gwynedd. Whether the Lagin who gave their name to Leinster and Lleyn set out from this country or from Ireland is a question of a different order, which cannot be discussed here; but every educated man is interested in preventing the obscuring of the evidence in point, on whichever side the weight of it may fall.

The use of the definite article in Welsh place-names and

the distinction of gender in them are points deserving of a note or two. The English word *croft* borrowed into Welsh appears in the Mabinogi of Manawyddan son of Llyr, as a feminine *groft*, so with the article we have *y Rofft*, "the Croft," liable to be written *Yr Offt*, whence *Gardd Offt*, "the Garden of the Croft," by dropping the *yr* (see pp. 227, 333). The word occurs in the same form in south Cardiganshire; for instance, on the farm of Esgair Eithin, near Pembryn, there is a field called *Rofft* or *y Rofft*, "the Croft." Another borrowed word deserving of notice here is the Latin *portus*, "a port or harbour," which in Welsh became *porth* of the same meaning: but though the word was masculine in Latin, it was bound on account of its vowel *o* to become feminine in Welsh, whence Porth Wyddno, on the edge of Cors Fochno, near the river Dovey, is now known simply as *y Borth*, "the Port," as is also sometimes Porth Euthwy, "the Village of Menai Bridge." But from Latin was also borrowed the feminine *porta*, "a gate or door," and this must for a double reason have originally been feminine in Welsh, but now as a synonym for *drws*, "a door," which is masculine, it has been forced to become itself masculine. The older gender of a Welsh noun is, however, not unfrequently retained in names of places, and we have an example of this in the present instance, namely in *Hafod y Borth* (pp. 223-225), "the Shieling of the Gate." The younger people are determined, I am told, to make it into Hafod y Porth, but I have the evidence of my wife that formerly she never heard it called anything but Hafod y Borth. The treatment of the word *dinas*, "a town or fort," is much the same; this word has largely superseded the shorter *din*, as in *Dinas Emrys* for an older *Din Emrys* or *Din Emreis* (see p. 198), "Ambrosius's Fort." Both *din* and *dinas*, from being neuter, first became masculine, but *dinas*, as a synonym of the feminine *tref*, has been ultimately attracted into the same gender, except in certain names of places, such as *Llyn Dinas* for *Llyn y Dinas*, "the Lake of the Fort"; compare *Pen y Dinas*, the name of one of the hills overlooking Aberystwyth, and *y Dinas*, the name of a farmhouse in the upper valley of the Rheidol. But the local philologist is doing his level best

to get rid of the inequality and to establish *y Ddinas* everywhere; and when he has succeeded with that, he will doubtless attack *y Braich Melyn* and every other *braich* that still dares to be masculine in Gwynedd.

One of the most difficult things to ascertain in the case of certain place-names is their accentuation. Where we have real compounds there is seldom any difficulty, as the accent has been levelled, and one is usually safe in following the general rule of placing the stress on the penultimate; but a great many Welsh place-names consist of words in syntactical contact; and owing to our accepting the English official rule of treating Welsh names as gibberish and writing them accordingly as single words, however many they may consist of, the spelling leaves one in doubt as to the accent under certain circumstances. Thus the compound *Glasfryn*, "Green-hill," is accented Glásfryn, but not so the syntactic combination Brynglas, "the Green Hill," which should be written Bryn Glas and have the principal accent placed on *Glas*. It does not matter much how one writes such names as Aberystwyth or Aber Ystwyth, since the accent is directed to the penultimate in either case; but if you write *Caerdydd*, "Cardiff," you suggest the general rule; but it does not apply, and the writing should be *Caer Dydd*, as the chief stress is on *Dydd*. It is all the more necessary to observe some such rule, as certain of these merely syntactic and non-compound names have nevertheless an accentuation which is not that of the single words of which they consist. Thus Cwmglas, "the Green Dingle," is not pronounced like *cwm glas* with the accent on *glas*, but very decidedly on *cwm*. More remarkable still is a name like *Llanycil* of a church near Bala, which, though it seems to analyse itself into *Llan y Cil*, "the Church of the Recess or Nook," has the accent very decidedly on the *y*; and so with the name *Penyberth* (or *Peneberth*), near Aberystwyth, which seems to mean *Pen y Berth*, "the Hill of the Bush." Moreover, the accentuation of such names differs in different localities: thus while Cardiff has in its neighbourhood a place called Penárth, which should be written Pen Arth, North Wales has more than one place of the name pro-

nounced Pénnarth. One of the most remarkable instances in point in this volume is *Strallyn* (p. 332), which in book Welsh would be in full *Ystrad y Llyn*, "the Lake's Shore or Strand," whence *Cwm Strallyn*, "the Dingle taking its name from *Strallyn*," and the actual name of the lake in that dingle, namely *Llyn Cwm Strallyn*, which being interpreted means at length "the Lake of the Dingle of the Lake's Strand." It is hard to conceive a more ingenious way of forcing the lake's original name into oblivion: as a matter of fact I have never known any one who could tell it me.

If ever anything should be done for Welsh topography, it is clear that the question of the accentuation of our place-names should not be overlooked. Another thing which the perusal of the following chapters has deeply impressed on my mind is the shifting and ever-changing state of our place-names, and the desirability of their being systematically collected and accurately recorded before further ravages have been committed among them by the ever-growing influence of English. Mr. Jenkins has set an excellent example by dealing so thoroughly with the topography of the Parish of Bedd Gelert, and by recording all its more important and characteristic place-names.

JOHN RHYS.

Jesus College, Oxford,
15*th June* 1899.

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BEDD GELERT

CHAPTER I

GENERAL

Position and Boundaries of the Parish.—The interesting and well-known parish of Bedd Gelert lies about eight miles south-east of the town of Carnarvon. To the popular mind it has never been other than a parish of the county of Carnarvon, but until about four years ago a large portion lay within the county of Merioneth. The border line of the two counties was changed for administrative purposes. The old division placed it in the cantref (or hundred) of Dunodig and Arvon. Nanmor, on the south-eastern side of Gwynen, is in the cwmwd of Ardudwy Uwch Artro, Merioneth; the portion west of the river Colwyn is in Eifionydd, the northern portion in Uwch Gwyrfai, and the rest in Arllechwedd. It was thus once situated in two counties and four deaneries—Ardudwy, Eifionydd, Arvon, and Arllechwedd. It is bounded on the north and north-east by the parishes of Bettws Garmon and Llanberis; on the east by Llandegai, Llanrhychwyn, and Dolwyddelen; on the south by Festiniog and Llanfrothen; and on the west by Penmorfa, Llanfihangel y Pennant, Llanllyfni, Llandwrog, and Llanwnda. Its greatest length from east to west—from Bwlch y Rhediad to Drws y Coed—is eight and a half miles, and its greatest breadth from south to north—from Ceryg y Rhwydwr to Clogwyn Coch on Snowdon—is about eight miles.

Varied Surface of the Parish.—In a Welsh parish of such

an extent the surface cannot be other than varied, but no adequate conception of the diversity of its features can possibly be had without personal observation, and, to some extent, exploration. Our highest mountain lies within its borders, and the rolling tide, not so long ago, all but washed its feet. The late P. B. Williams, the reverend author of *Tourists' Guide to Carnarvonshire*, fell a victim to an old fancy, that may not yet be exploded in many minds, that Snowdon summit is in the parish of Llanberis; but the boundary line between this parish and the next one runs straight from Llyn Glas, in Cwm Tre Weirydd, to the top of Crib y Distyll, so that the peak lies well within Bedd Gelert parish. Indeed, there is a strip of the parish of Bettws Garmon separating Bedd Gelert and Llanberis parishes just here. The height of Snowdon is given as 3571, Crib y Distyll as 3550, Carnedd Iggin 3500, Llechog 3000, Crib Goch and Lliwedd 2900, Moel Hebog 2578, Aran 2470, and Y Garn 2361 feet. The other familiar hills, which form a distinct part of the magnificent scenery of Snowdonia, are not associated so much with measures as with figures; of these we may mention Cnicht (*alias* Sugar Loaf), Moel y Meirch, Moel Lefn, Y Graig Ddu, and Y Wenallt.

Nestling between these hills and mountains we have a large number of *cymoedd*, or mountain valleys and glens, some of which are so isolated as seldom to be disturbed by the foot of any human being except that of a shepherd or an enthusiastic explorer. The lisps of silvery rills and the bleatings of a lonely sheep only make us all the more conscious of the extent of their isolation. Others, again, are wild, and even weird, hemmed in on both sides by dusky rocks which storms have whipped bare. Leaping through these wild *cymoedd* are ceaseless streams, which hurl their waters over crags and rush down to larger streams as if for the first.

Three large low-lying vales (or *nentydd*) skirt the hills, and are ever the wonder and admiration of all the tourists which journey through them in thousands year after year. There was a time when trees filled these valleys and climbed halfway up the highest points of the mountains, and a still earlier time when glistening glaciers made these valleys groan with their

sudden weight; but now these ancient haunts of wolves are safe abodes and sweet pastures for the choicest mountain sheep. Lakes like sparkling diamonds adorn these vales and, mirror-like, reflect the surrounding scenery. The vale of Colwyn boasts of Llyn Ffynon y Gwas, Llyn Glas, Llyn Coch, and Llyn y Nadredd, in Cwm Tre Weirydd and Cwm Glan yr Afon; Llyn y Dywarchen and Llyn y Gadair, near Drws y Coed. The Vale of Gwynen has Llyn Dinas, Llyn Gwynen, Llyn Teyrn, Llyn Llydaw, Llyn Ffynon Las—the three in Cwm

Dinas Ddu Farm. Nanmor.
River Glaslyn.
Snowdon (in the distance).
Entering Bedd Gelert Parish from Portmadoc.

Dyli—Llyn Edno, and the three Llynau'r Cŵn. In Nanmor are Llyn yr Adar, Llyn Llagi, Llynau yr Arddu (three), and Llyn Hafod y Llyn. Out of twenty lakes fifteen contain splendid fish. Through the *nentydd*

> The smoothly-running rivers flow
> O'er shining pebbles, crystal clear,
> ELVET, *trans.*

joining, frequently, many lakes in their course.

Products of the Parish.—The parish claims to yield three

kinds of produce—agricultural, mineral, and slate. The first consists mainly of cattle for meat markets, butter, cheese, and wool. Barley and oats are grown in the lower lands for home use, and in Nanmor farmers even venture a little wheat. The best land is found in Nanmor and the lower fields surrounding the village, where the soil has a gravelly bottom. The clayey slate bottom of Nant Colwyn permits the surface to put on a swardy coat, but it is far less rich and nourishing than the shorter grass lying among the old greenstone rocks on the southern and eastern sides of the parish. As the farmers devote nearly the whole of their attention to breeding and fattening cattle, many changes or improvements in other branches of agriculture cannot be expected; and yet farmers have adopted most of the improved methods of cultivation which apply to their farm work as soon as the majority of places in Wales. A hundred years ago tilling and manuring was done by hardly a farmer within the parish; there were only two hay-fields in the whole of the lowland by the village; the hay-fields which now adorn the place were then but marshy or rocky wastes. An occasional hay-field could have been seen near farmhouses and Hafottai—such as the one by the Hafotty of Cwm Dyli.

The farmers of those days laboured under great difficulties. The two nearest market-towns, Carnarvon and Llanrwst, could be reached only by a bridle-path, and every article had to be carried on the back of either man or beast. The peat from the turbaries and the hay from the moors had to be carried on sleds or wheelless dray-carts. There were people living forty years ago who remembered the first cart proper coming into the parish. It was made at Carnarvon for Hugh Anwyl, Dolfriog, and although not much larger than a wheel-barrow, it had to be carried to Dolfriog in pieces, and there put together. The unevenness of the land, however, defied every attempt at using it. It was ultimately sold to Rhys Williams, Hafod y Llan, and carried bit by bit over Mynydd Nanmor to Nant Gwynen; but even there, where the meadows were fairly even and the land moderately well cultivated, it was not of much use until a road was made through the vale in 1805.

These roads were such boons that the stock and products of the farmers rapidly increased through the new marketing facilities.

The name of Daniel Vawdrey, who bought the Plas Gwynant estate in 1803, is inseparably connected, not only with the travelling facilities which were introduced, but also with the new energy which was breathed into the farming of the beginning of this century. He gave his tenants an example by tilling land which had never felt the plough, and turning

(*From Wm. Williams, Llandegai's "Observations."*)

Haymaking in Pre-Viarian Snowdon.

apparently hopeless wildernesses into splendid fields ; and then created within them a spirit of competition by offering prizes to those who excelled in certain branches of farming. His advent thus somewhat changed the aspect of agriculture within the district, and corn and hay now receive a fair attention. Some of the farms have had their rent trebled since those days, and one or two increased even sixfold.

The minerals of the parish are said to have been known

to the Romans, and an old copper mine at Drws y Coed is connected with Roman times. Aberglaslyn, Bryn y Felin, and Sygun were worked long before the middle of the sixteenth century. Veins of copper, lead, zinc, iron, ochre, and manganese have been discovered and partially worked. Large quantities of copper have been taken from Bryn y Felin and Aberglaslyn from time to time, and several veins have been worked in Mynydd Nanmor and Sygun mountain. An attempt is being made at present to open up a mine on the Nant Gwynen side of Sygun mountain, but it cannot prove of much value until a railway comes near enough to carry the ore away without troubling carters; and even then——? Other copper mines which seemed flourishing once are those of Hafod y Porth, Gallt y Llyn, Bryn Dinas, Braich yr Oen, and the two Lliwedds, but these have all been at a standstill for many years. The Snowdon mine was working quite recently, and may be now. The best and richest veins were those of Drws y Coed and Simnai y Ddylluan, and none of the mines have been so thoroughly worked and tested as these have. Indeed, the Drws y Coed mine was for a long time a lucrative concern, and the marvel is that they have not long been exhausted. From all that we have gleaned about the copper of the parish in general, it has far too many impurities ever to pay for its working.

Impurities in such proportions are found in the lead veins of Lliwedd Bach, Bwlch Mwrchan, and Gwastad Annas that it would be hopeless to try and profit by working them. Manganese has been found in Mynydd Nanmor and Perthi, iron in Oerddwr and Moel Hebog, and ochre by Tan y Rhiw, Nanmor; but the prospects were not tempting enough to work much on them.

The slate-stone covers about half the parish. It forms the bed of nearly the whole of Nant Colwyn, from Glan yr Afon to Oerddwr, and from Cwm Hafod Ruffydd to Graig Wen and Cwmllan. A strip lies also on the border of Nanmor and Nant Gwynen, from Berthlwyd to Hafod Tangraig, and from there to Allt Llyn Llagi. The only quarry in course of development is that of Glan yr Afon, Rhyd Ddu,

and is of recent date. An immense quantity of slates has been taken from Cwmllan from time to time; but that has been at a standstill for many years. Clogwyn y Gwin quarry is very old, but not developed. Ffridd, Caer y Gors, Llyn y Gadaer, Cwm Cloch—all in Nant Colwyn—have been worked within the last thirty years; but these can hardly be called anything more than diggings. Castell, Nant Gwynen, has not been worked for more than a generation; Llagi and Berthlwyd are very old; the quarry at Gerynt has been worked within recent years; Dinas Ddu and Cwm Caeth have been meddled with within the last thirty years, but never properly worked.

What may be done with this subterranean store in the future we know not; it may be that not much can be done with it. We must, however, confess to a little bias, and we cannot say that we wish to see these magnificent old mountains torn and scarred by mines and quarries. The gain even to wealthy companies from their hidden treasures is a very doubtful quantity; the loss can easily be great. They are already a source of great gain in the summer season as delightful rambling ground to visitors, and pleasant panoramic pictures to those who delight in taking a drive through. Hitherto we seem to see the word SACRILEGE written on nearly every attempt at making ugly scars on this glorious panorama: and such hills and dales are rare enough even in varied little Wales that they might well be spared the merciless pickaxe and fiendish dynamite.

Mining Adventures and Failures.—But whatever may be said against the rough handling of a romantic parish like this by speculators, or against the quality of the ore or slate, there are two other reasons, common to other districts besides, why things have not succeeded better. One is that a few penniless miners have frequently ventured to open up some particular seam which they thought must turn out well. Want of immediate success has compelled them to give up and go where they could secure wages. Or a few men of limited capital have speculated, and, not having enough money, have failed to open out the work in such a way as to get it to yield

any profit. They have been obliged to abandon their enterprise before putting it to the proper test, for fear of losing their all. When stronger companies see the abandoned diggings, and find that they have been fruitlessly worked by experienced miners or by capitalists who know the district well, they cannot be persuaded to try where such men have failed—even though it be not real failure. And, of course, every failure, genuine or so-called, brings a bad name to the district.

The other reason for the past failures of mining and quarrying industries is the action of dishonest speculators, who have used a remote district like this for the purpose of robbing innocent, if profit-seeking, shareholders. They come in search of a mine—one already worked, if possible—and put a few men to work on it; they then take an isolated sample of the ore, split up the needed capital into shares, and publish exaggerated and misleading announcements of "the immense wealth of ore," and "the exceptional prospects of the mine." Then a start is made, not in opening out the mine, of course, but in making roads from the high road to the mine, in building commodious houses for manager and miners, in providing costly machinery. A strict system of economy is adopted in the number of men engaged on the mine itself, until at last plant and approaches are complete, while the ore is still far from being ready to bring out. The goal is now reached, the capital is spent, and the poor shareholders are, many of them, ruined; but the chuckling promoters have "made themselves." There is an instance within this very district of a capital of £60,000 being thus squandered, and when the company was dissolved, the mine, plant, and houses were all sold to another company for £500! The new company consisted mainly of the promoters of the old one, and the concern was worked with profit for some time.

Rateable Value of the Parish.—The rateable value of a mountainous parish like this must necessarily be small as compared with its size. The land does not admit of much improvement, and £2050 may be considered quite enough as the amount of its rateable value. House property is

increasing every year, and the buildings are rated at £3076, upon which a tax of 2s. 4d. is levied. The parish tithe-land measures about 21,000 acres, yielding a sum per annum of something like £130.

Charities.—A report on the charities of this parish was made in 1834, when it was pointed out that the Parliamentary returns of 1786 mention four charities. The *first* was

How many here have wondering stood
To watch the flashing, raging flood. (See p. 325.)

Maurice Wynne's Charity, who provided £2 : 13 : 4 for the maintenance of a poor boy to be educated at Friars' School, Bangor, out of the rents of the farms of Meillionen and Hafod Ruffydd. This was lost owing to the parishioners neglecting to send a poor boy to be thus educated. The *second* was William Wynne's Charity, whereby a rent-charge of £3 : 6s. per annum was provided to purchase six white cloth coats for the poorest men of the parish at Christmas; six penny loaves,

to be distributed every other week in the church lobby, and ten shillings a year to the rector for a sermon on Ash Wednesday. This charity is now in dispute at law. It was paid regularly from the rent of Ffridd Farm until September 1885, when the agent of General Owen Williams ordered Mr. Morgan Pierce, tenant, not to pay the money any longer, but to allow those who concerned themselves with it to apply for it to his London solicitors. The farm has since been sold by General Williams to Mr. William Pierce, son of Mr. M. Pierce. The *third* was Pierce Griffith's Charity, which consisted of £5, to be given to the poor. This was entrusted to John Roberts, Llyndy Isaf, but whether the application mentioned in the Report of 1834 was made and the money paid, we know not. The *fourth* was the Charities of Mrs. Jones and Maurice Anwyl. Mrs. Jones left £50 for ten poor widows, and Maurice Anwyl augmented the sum by £10, and directed that the sum be raised and paid out of his real estate. This money was in the hands of Hugh Anwyl, Dolfriog, when he became insolvent, and was lost. These charities have been inquired into quite recently by W. Cadwaladr Davies, Esq., in June 1894, and by T. E. Morris, Esq., LL.B., in December 1898, when the above facts were brought to light.

Condition of the People.—The social aspects of life have undergone many changes within recent years, some of which have made a distinct impression on this parish in habits, dress, and food. The notions and ideas of the outside world are brought before the inhabitants during the summer months, and the Welsh dislike for eccentricity has led them to adopt the dress and manners of their critical visitors, much to the latter's regret. There is but little wealth displayed among them, and only a minimum of poverty; and this probably accounts, to some extent, for the even tone of morality which pervades the parish. For the people are sober, honest, and thrifty, keen in their conduct of worldly affairs, and finding their greatest pleasure in fulfilling their ordinary duties, and in the affairs of religion. They may be divided into the two classes of (1) farmers and farm-labourers, and (2) miners, quarrymen, and artisans.

The farmers are an exceedingly active and hard-working class. The tenant under no circumstances entrusts his farm to his hired men. Land is so dear and money so difficult to get, that it frequently happens that both tenant and his sons and daughters have to toil from year's end to year's end to get two ends to meet. He is therefore obliged to cut short the education of his bairns in order to pay his rent, and keep a roof above their heads. Many years ago one of the sons of the parish said, "The farmers live like the beast that perishes, working, eating, and sleeping. They begin their labours at cockcrow, and give over at bedtime. They are keen and shrewd in their business affairs, but very indifferent about knowledge. It is but seldom one sees in a farmhouse any books except old almanacs and an occasional booklet, which might be called the rubbish of the press—the Book of Books excepted. To this there are exceptions, but that is the general character of the farmer and farm-servant class, as found in the parish at the present time."

The farmer is hardly better off for leisure to-day than he was then, but his desire for knowledge has been greatly stimulated, and the majority of farmhouses have a little case of books of the good, substantial type. The selection is almost invariably the same. It consists generally of biographies of preachers, sermons, and commentaries, well-bound volumes of connectional and national periodicals, and, perchance, a volume or two of poetry. Then a weekly journal has now become one of the essentials of the farmstead.

Miners, quarrymen, and artisans form a class of very different characteristics. Their mode of life is different, and their fixed hours of labour give them a margin for self-improvement. They are not always so shrewd as the farmers, but nearly always more enlightened. They are progressive, and most unselfish in their efforts for social, educational, and religious improvements.

In a Welsh parish denominationalism is a big factor, but here we find that about nine out of every ten are Calvinistic Methodists, or Welsh Presbyterians. A Yorkshire lady once thanked us for the second alternative, for the word Calvinistic,

she said, always horrified her, and she was in hopes that Calvinists of all classes were extinct. She was grateful to find that this denomination was usually known in Wales as *Methodists*. Hence our insertion of the alternative here. Great faithfulness is shown by the parishioners in attending and supporting their respective churches, four of which belong to the Calvinistic Methodists, one to the Congregational, and one to the Anglicans. Criminal charges are very rare, and the sick and needy are never neglected.

The number of the inhabitants has not changed much in sixty years. In 1838 it was 1280, and now it is about 1220. We believe that the number has been, some time in the interval, 1390.

CHAPTER II

ANTIQUITIES AND FOLK-LORE

Antiquities.—It is not our intention to deal critically with the antiquities and folk lore of this parish, though some of them have but little interest apart from criticism—the priory and the legend of Gelert, for example. Our concern is mainly that of relating the traditions and recording observations. Most of the antiquities of the parish belong to a very early period, and only a few belong to the Middle Ages.

The twenty odd Hafottai of the parish would naturally lead one to the conclusion that by far the greater part of the parish belonged to the Prior at one time; but that would be a misleading conclusion. The majority of them belong to the period immediately following the dissolution of the monasteries. One or two old ruins and outhouses belong to the earliest part of the fifteenth century, if the following is anything more than a tradition. Owing to the shelter and protection which the people of these parts had given to Owen Glyndwr, the English king passed a law prohibiting the people to build houses whose rafters were not low enough to touch the ground. To avoid

that foolish law the builders had recourse to an ingenious plan. They got trees with strong branches stretching forth at a certain angle, joined the ends of the two stems at the ridge, and allowed the branches to touch the ground at the two extremes. Several of these were placed parallel to one another, and stones were built in between these branches in such a way as to cover them. Covered over with thatch or rough slates, these made fairly roomy houses. Specimens may still be seen in the old ruin of Perthi Uchaf, above the village, and in the still-used outhouse of Beudy Maes yr Efail.

Towards the middle of the sixteenth century a certain cross style of architecture became very common, especially in the houses of the better middle class. Berthlwyd and Hafod Lwyfog are specimens. Meillionen may be mentioned as an example of the simpler style that was adopted in the seventeenth century, and which was in vogue until quite recently.

Of the various remains in Wales none are more common than the Cairns. They are formed of small stones gathered together into heaps; apparently there was no attempt at careful construction, but a closer examination reveals care and arrangement which time and weather have undone. Some are long and rounded, without being very high; others again are quite round and high. One of these, with a large stone placed on top of the heap, may be seen at Fron Danwg, Llanfrothen. It is now fairly unanimously agreed that these cairns were old burying-places, and antiquarians assign them to three periods, according to the remains found in them. A general custom prevailed among nearly every ancient nation of burying the arms, jewels, or toys of the dead with them. Such remains, then, as are found in these cairns bear witness to the civilised position of the nation and the age in which they were buried.

The *first period* is called the stone age, because arms of flint have been found in some of the cairns. It is believed that these remains belong to the people who inhabited these parts before the Celts. The *second* is termed the bronze age —signs of Celtic inhabitants—because they cremated their dead; and the bronze relics and earthen pitchers with the ashes of the dead have been found in the same cairns. The

third is the iron age, in which golden relics as well as iron ones, have been found in the cairns. This period is broadly assigned to Roman times, and as antiquarians have generally adopted that view, it may not be wise to quarrel with it. We, nevertheless, remind the reader of the fact that the ancient Britons not only knew of iron, but were skilled miners and smelters long before they came in contact with the Romans. Such a statement will certainly be questioned by men who have gleaned their knowledge of the old Britons from some English histories, many of which have been written with consummate ignorance, and all the dogmatism which ignorance makes easy. The first English history which we read told us what cowardly savages our ignorant painted ancestors were, and probably the gentleman who took upon himself to instruct a railway compartmentful of passengers about the ancient Britons had read the same book, and spoke the notions of thousands. His linguistic knowledge led him to the discovery that the Welsh for "bridge," "cheese," etc., strongly resembled the Latin words for the same. From this he proceeded, with great energy and self-satisfaction, to prove that the ancient Britons had no idea how to make cheese and bridges until the Romans came over and taught them. Llew Llwyfo was sitting in a corner of the compartment attentively listening, until the communicative friend paused for a moment, and he then ventured to drive home the fallacy of his reasoning by asking, "Then the ancient Britons had no teeth, I suppose, until the Romans came over to put them in for them? for I find that the Latin and Welsh words for 'teeth' are almost identical."

It was the popular belief that cairns were the graves of evil-doers, probably from the contempt shown towards them by passers-by, who made upon themselves the sign of the cross and then cast each a stone at the heap. An instance of this mode of burying great evil-doers is found in Joshua vii. 26, but antiquarians believe them to be the graves of heroes and noblemen, here and among all Celtic tribes. This was the opinion of the writers of the Middle Ages, as the following quotation from the biographer of Gruffydd ab Cynan proves: "The battle was fought on a mountain, which the inhabitants of that

country call Mynydd Carn, that is, the Mountain of the Cairn, because an immense stone cairn is found there, under which a champion of the primitive ages was buried." Quotations could also be made from *Englynion y Beddau* (epitaphs) to prove that the heaps were erected over the graves of distinguished men, and not of evil-doers. One must suffice :—

> A noble soldier's grave—whose hand
> Made death familiar in the land,
> Ere the last silence round him fell—
> Beneath the stones he resteth well ;
> Llachar ab Rhun in the Vale of Cain.
>
> ELVET, *trans.*

MOUNDS are not so common in Wales, which is probably due to the abundance of stones ; and it is quite probable that agricultural greed has turned their excellent turf into part of the original soil. Such of them as have been opened and searched have contained soldiers' equipments, stone chests, urns, and human remains, like the cairns. Some of them have contained roomy cells, made of large stone slabs, which many antiquarians have mistaken for cromlechs. The most noted mound of this kind in North Wales is the one near Plas Newydd in Anglesey, called Bryn yr Hen Bobl (The Mound of the Old People).

The use of CROMLECHS is not easy to determine. They consist of a large stone, lying slantingly on three or more stone pillars, varying from three to seven feet high. One class of antiquarians maintains that they are tombstones ; while another class insists that they are Druidical altars. The word cromlech is derived from the Welsh *crom* (=concave), and *llech* (=a stone or slab). The verb *crymu* (=to bend or bow) is derived from the same root as *crom*, so a cromlech suggests "a stone before which one bends in worship," on special occasions. It may be, however, that the name is due to the very shape of the stone itself, which is always of a concave surface ; so that we cannot determine the use of the cromlech from the derivation of the word. They can hardly have been tombstones, since several of them have been found on rocky places where burying would be impossible, while we have no

instance of either an urn or a stone chest having been discovered under a cromlech. The burial-places of several distinguished men are mentioned in the memoirs called *Englynion Beddau Milwyr Ynys Prydain* (Epitaphs of the Soldiers of the Isle of Britain), several of which have been identified. In no instance has a cromlech been found on a grave.

We have no instance of a Stone Circle in this parish. They consist of stones placed on ends, which vary as much in size as the circles do in circumference. They must have had something to do with Druidical worship, and are found nearly always near the cromlechs.

Folk-Lore.—Every district has its legends and traditions, and these supply the student of ethnology with excellent materials for his studies. Nothing enables one to see with more clearness into the characteristics of a people or a nation than its folk-lore. The tales which men are accustomed to believe and relate both form the character and serve as an index of their disposition and bent of mind. A brave and adventurous nation has its legends of soldiers, battles, and adventures; if religious, its traditions will be full of religious personifications, of monks, nuns, and remarkable miracles by distinguished old saints of bygone days.

The inhabitants of hilly countries are said to be livelier and quicker of comprehension, more spritely and poetic, more romantic and credulously minded, than the inhabitants of flat countries. As a result, there is a much larger amount of folk-lore current among people of the hilly districts than among those of the low-lying lands; and the traditions and legends are also of a more romantic character, being filled with the creative elements of the animated fancy which is bred among the hills.

Wales is noted for its tales of fancy. Its *Mabinogion* are said to be the origin of most of the continental fiction of the Middle Ages. Its Arthurian romances have engaged, and still are engaging, the minds of scholars in almost every country, and Wales boasts of one scholar whose mind is still labouring under their spell. But these studies are mostly

associated with seats of learning or the pages of some learned periodical. If one cares to know something of their place in Welsh life in the past, he must allow his imagination to transport him to the country farmhouses of the mountainous districts. There, in the lonely farmhouse on a winter's night, might have been seen a large company, gathered together from several places in the district, sitting round a large peat fire and relating these stories. It is difficult to conceive of

Gelert's Grave (in Winter).

the pitch of excitement to which the minds of the listeners were sometimes worked by the skilful *raconteur*.

A great place for spreading these tales was the special gathering known as *nosweithiau llawen* (pleasant evenings). A certain farmhouse would be fixed upon as the meeting-place, and the word would soon spread throughout the whole parish that on a certain night at a certain place a *noswaith lawen* would be held. The livelier section of the older men would take the lead, and the young men and women would

gather round them from all parts of the parish. Proceedings could not begin until rather late, from the very nature of the young people's circumstances. They would all have to finish their day's work before setting out, and frequently they would have a long way to go. Drink and the harp were essential in these meetings; and once these enlivening elements had reached the heart and the head of the orators, the evening was considered to be in full swing. Lively songs were interspersed with amusing stories; the harpist would strike up one of the rousing Welsh melodies, and immediately a voice would chime in with words which spoke of love, of patriotism, or of deeds of bravery. He would then call for rest and a story. Then would one of the leaders call for silence, and the joviality and laughter would immediately cease. Every ear would attend to the *raconteur* while he related the story of the sport and daring of our forefathers and the feats of our ancestors on the battle-field. The magnificent pictures which were drawn of Arthur and his brave and noble knights roused the spirits of the young, and bred within them a courage and an independence which neither defeat nor tyranny could crush; and we shall have reason to call the reader's attention to this fact in some of the stories which we have to relate later on.

As a rule, the ghost story did not find its way into the proceedings until somewhat late in the evening, or, rather, early morning. When it came, it frequently had a very sobering effect. The Welsh are generally spoken of as visionary, and there is no doubt that the large amount of ghosts that enter into our stories justifies the appellation of our more prosaic judges. At the *nosweithiau llawen* ghosts would always come in for a very good share of treatment, and once these were brought into the circle, no one thought of leaving the meeting-place until the dawn came, or a sufficient number of companions was secured for the journey home. From these gatherings fresh stories were carried into every nook in the parish.

With regard to the general character of the folk-lore of Wales, it may be conveniently divided into three classes: (1) the Historical; (2) the Educational; and (3) the Religious. To the first division belong the military Mabinogion and the

legends connected with historical personages, events, and places. To the second division belong those legends which are the fruit of the imagination, and which aim at conveying some particular moral. Excellent examples of this class may be seen in the Iolo MSS., which are there assigned to Cattwg Ddoeth (Cattwg the Wise), one of which is the beautiful legend of "The Man who killed his Greyhound," which we shall quote later on. Legends about saints make up the third division—saints like Beuno, Cynhafal, Gwenfrewi, etc. The Mabinogi of the Sow of Coll ab Collfrewi is thought by some to be a religious legend, as also is the legend of the Dragons, both of which we shall use. But the religion of the old Britons would take in the second division also, so that it is hardly advisable to include either of these two legends among religious legends.

It is now commonly agreed that most legends and traditions are founded on facts, but these facts have been so clothed with fictitious additional matter by the mouth-to-mouth method of transmission, that they cannot reasonably have the authority of history. But history itself sometimes requires explaining, and it is not infrequently dumb; then folk-lore becomes a helpful ally. Consequently, the history of no district or country can be complete without its folk-lore. This is one reason why so many of the traditions of this parish are inserted here; and even if they should not be palatable to the careful historian, they may please the general reader.

CHAPTER III

THE VILLAGE

Its Position.—The village of Bedd Gelert is situated at the meeting-place of the rivers Colwyn and Gwynen, on a spot which marks the centre of the parish, and which reminds one of the centre of the figure which stands for the Manx coat-of-arms. If one stands on the broad wooden bridge by the con-

fluence, he will be struck with the symmetrical arrangement of nature, which gives to each angle its due share of the limited plain. The angle between the Colwyn and Gwynen may contain a smaller area of actual level ground, but this impression only comes to one after a closer scrutiny. It is covered with houses, which hide from view the actual space. The beds of the Colwyn and the Gwynen are of equal depth and breadth, and though the Gwynen may pour down a larger volume of water per day, one must be told so before he thinks it is the case—so careful has nature been in dividing the verdant plain and filling the busy streams.

The beautiful isolation of the village impresses every one that sees it, and easily enables one to understand Pennant's remark that it "was the fittest place in the world to inspire religious meditation." It is not more than sixty feet above the level of the sea at Portmadoc, and yet it is surrounded by some of the highest mountains in Carnarvonshire. We are little surprised to find that poets feel an almost irresistible desire to celebrate its charms in verse, since the most prosaic is sometimes tempted into "the school of the poet" after a visit. Traces of its inspiration, at least, are still plentiful, and one only needs to turn over the pages of the several "Visitors' Books" in the different hotels to get them. They but seldom reveal the gift of verse, but we cannot on that account deny the fact of the inspiration. Few attain even the level of the following four lines, left at the Royal Goat Hotel:—

> Beddgelert! Gelert's bed and grave,
> Replete with nature's charms;
> Great guardian mountains stand around,
> And hold it in their arms.

The last two lines are fairly happy as a description of the situation, and remind us of an *englyn* written on one of the neighbouring hills, of which the following is a translation:—

> Soft dales are stretched beneath our eyes,
> The woody slopes are freshly dight,
> While rival mountains crowd the skies,
> Mutely to kiss the stars of light.
>
> Ioan Madog; Elvet, *trans.*

Bedd Gelert (in Winter, from Craig y Llan).

These mountains stand, like highly-walled fortresses, defending the little village from the wrath of storms. Looking southward, we have the black and boggy old Craig y Llan. Faithful to its post, if treacherous to the foot, it towers aloft almost perpendicularly, and stretches out its long arm to ward off the humid south-easterly winds. Let the reader mark the dark and melancholy aspect of this heather-covered mountain, and he cannot help being struck with the beautiful contrast which it makes with the rich and verdant meadows that lie unmoved beneath its weight. Turning our eyes to the west, we see Moel Hebog, with bending head thrust through the encircling clouds, nestling the village when the western storms are raging. Behind the village are the green-tinted hills of Graig Wen and the Aran, boldly and firmly rising to protect it from the biting northern and north-eastern winds.

But beautiful as this secluded spot is admitted to be at present, it must have been far more beautiful in the olden days. Then the surrounding hills were covered almost to their halves with thickly grown trees, and the level ground was dotted over with groves of the unaging oak. Then came the hand of the spoiler, and reduced the whole to barren slopes and treeless plains. Thanks to the vital forces of nature and the wise hearts of her lovers, these slopes are gradually entering once more into their own inheritance.

Its Name.—The name of the village has been spelt in several ways from time to time, each writer spelling the word according to his idea of its derivation. But at last a certain amount of uniformity has been attained, probably through a better understanding of the peculiar sound of the Welsh letter *dd* on the part of English-speaking visitors. Lewis, in his *Topographical Dictionary*,[1] says that "this extensive parish was anciently called Llan-Ybor." He probably meant Llan y Porth; but he has quoted no authority for his statement. Yet the local tradition that the Pass of Aberglaslyn was at one time called "Y Borth" gives the statement some probability. It is fairly certain that the little village of Aberglaslyn was called Aber y Porth, and the only other place where

[1] Fourth edition.

marine transactions were carried on with the Traeth Mawr was distinguished from it by the word Gest—Borth y Gest. Some have taken the name of the farm above Dinas Emrys, Hafod y Porth, as an argument in favour of the historical value of the tradition relating to the old name Llan y Porth; but it is more than probable that "Porth" there refers to the entrance into the fortress of Dinas Emrys.

Peter Bailey Williams[1] thought that the place may have had its name from a "hermit's cell." The secluded spot had induced the pious hermit to settle here, and he built for himself a hut. Filling in the lines, the mind sees him shyly seeking his bread at the farm and cottage doors. His ascetic temperament charms the native people, and when he dies his unconscious disciples build a church on the very spot where his religion had gradually eaten out his life. They name the church Bwth Cilvach y Garth (the Hut in the Recess of the Hill), which is corrupted or abbreviated into Bwth Cilarth, and then into Bethcelert. The word "garth" is "frequently applied to any hill, rock, or promontory," as he says, but the only instance of such a use of the word near this place is its plural form "geirth." But as Geirth is the name of a little hill between Dinas Emrys and Llyn Dinas, it is not likely that the word would come into such use. We believe the position of the church and the supposed process of corruption or abbreviation of the name are also against the whole theory.

W. Williams, Llandegai, seems to have given P. B. Williams a part of the above suggestion. He says: "This *Celert* or *Cilert* must, in all probability, have been some old monk or saint of that name who was interred here, and was either the first founder of the church, or one to whose memory it was dedicated, if built after his time."[2] There is a church in Carmarthenshire dedicated to a saint of the name of Cêler, but there is no nearer instance.

The popular theory is the one connected with "the immortal dog of Llewelyn." We tremble to say it, but "the

[1] *Transaction of the Cymmrodorion*, vol. ii. pt. iv. p. 246, note.
[2] *Observations of the Snowdon Mountains*, p. 46.

truth must out"; there is no long-standing authority for the opinion that the name has anything to do with the myth. Some have quoted the original of the following lines as sufficient authority for the theory, but the *englyn* is evidently of recent date:—

> Killhart, the honour of the chase,
> In Eivion's heights finds resting-place;
> The day the deer before him fled
> His master never went ill-fed.
>
> ELVET, *trans.*

There are several objections to the theory that the place has derived its name from the legend. First, the story would have us believe that the pious institution of Bedd Gelert was established by Llewelyn ab Iorwerth to commemorate the deliverance of his son from the wolf, and to be a lasting expression of his grief at having rashly killed his faithful Gelert, or Killhart, the gift of his father-in-law, King John of England. As a matter of fact, the church was not first built by Llewelyn, because it had received endowments from Owen Gwynedd, who had passed away a quarter of a century before Llewelyn was born. Second, the legend has not long been connected with the place, as we shall show later on. Third, a better and a more satisfactory explanation of the name can be given; and as this section has been devoted to pulling down—very unwillingly, we admit—it is only fair that we should devote another section to building up.

Its Name explained.—"To hold and to express an opinion is the common right of all," says an old Welsh proverb; and we venture to use our right here. Close by the spot that is pointed out as "Gelert's Grave" is a green hillock, on which stands a cow-house, which was built within the last score years of the eighteenth century. In order to facilitate the erection of this plain structure the hill was levelled down, and so reduced a good deal from its former height. From time immemorial the hill has been called "Bryn y Bedd" (the Hill of the Grave), a name which most people would now explain as being due to its proximity to the dog's grave. Some have freely expressed their opinion that the very position

of the hillock, in the middle of level fields, suggests the locality of Llewelyn's summer residence, and that it has been formed by the ruins of the royal house. Others, on the other hand, suppose it is composed of the ruins of the Prior's palace, while others are equally convinced that it is no other than the remains of the nunnery which, as they assert, once stood on the spot.

But we feel satisfied that these suppositions, however stoutly maintained, are without the slightest foundation. At the time when Mr. John Prichard was the landlord of the Goat Hotel, the trunk of a large tree was dug up from the western side of the hillock. He, being intelligently interested in antiquities, got men to dig into the elevated heap in search of the ruins of some old building. But though they dug deep and far, they came across nothing but stones, which must have once been in the bed of a river. So Mr. Prichard felt quite satisfied that there had been no building of any kind on the spot.

To what conclusion, then, does the finding of such a heap of river stones lead us? It is quite evident that they were never washed there by the river itself, and we cannot avoid the impression that they were carefully carried there. If asked, For what purpose? we answer that it must have been to form a cairn or a mound of mixed earth and stones. Both the structure and the name of the hillock favour this conclusion.

The next question that arises is, Whose grave is it? In the old Welsh records we are told that a host of Irishmen came into this country at the beginning of the fourth century, under the leadership of "Don, King of Lochlyn and Dublin," and that by a stroke of deception they got the Romans to give them the rule of Anglesey, Arvon, and the Hundred of Dunodig. Dinas Emrys, then called Dinas Ffaraon, was one of their most important stations. Serigi Wyddel, the last of the Irish kings, and who was killed by Caswallon Lawhir at Ceryg y Gwyddel, in Anglesey, was called "Serigi Wyddel, the son of Brynach Wyddel of Dinas Ffaraon."

Taking the statement that these Irish chiefs had one of their most important stations in the neighbourhood in the

light of the following genealogical list, we cannot avoid the suggestion that the mound was piled up in honour of one of these princes: "Serigi Wyddel ab Mwrchan, ab Eurnach Hen, ab Eilio, ab Rhechgyr, ab Cathbalig, ab Cathal, ab Machno, ab Einion, ab CELERT, ab Math, ab Mathonwy, etc., etc."[1] We cannot vouch for the correctness of this list, but it has as much probability as any other list of the same antiquity. Here, then, is one fairly plausible solution of the name-problem. Bryn y Bedd is the burial mound of the Irish chief Celert, and the village is called after him "Bedd Gelert." The traditions of the neighbourhood seem to favour this opinion. Muriau y Dref, above Gwastad Annas, is said to have been an old Irish city; and close by Llyn Gwynen stands a farmhouse, which is called to this day Bwlch Mwrchan—the second name in the genealogical list. Moel Eilio and Pen Machno, too, still preserve two more of the few names quoted above.

There is another fairly plausible conjecture which will be probably preferred by many, especially by those who are already convinced that the name is closely connected with monkish settlers. One of the earliest orders of monks in Celtic countries was called Ceile De, or Keledei, which name means "a servant of God." Kurtz, in his *Church History*,[2] says that to the old Celtic priests "was given the Celtic name Kele-de, *servus* or *vir Dei*, Latinised as Colidei, and in modern form Culdees," and Dr. Skene says that "the Culdees originally sprang from that ascetic order who adopted a solitary service of God in an isolated cell as the highest form of religious life."[3] It was this class of monks, or hermits, that established the Monastery of Bardsey, with which Bishop Anian, in a letter which will be quoted later on, makes Bedd Gelert Priory coeval.

Again, Pennant says: "In my possession is a drawing of the seal of the priory, dated 1531; on it is the figure of the Virgin and child, but no part of the legend except

[1] See *Iolo MSS.*, pp. 471, 472.
[2] Second edition (London, 1891), vol. i. p. 459.
[3] Quoted in Dr. Muir's *The Church of Scotland* (Guild Library), p. 25.

BETHKELE."[1] It is quite possible for this to be a corruption of Bwth Celei (the Hut of the Culdees), and for the name of Bedd Gelert to be thus derived.

Its Streets and Terraces.—Bedd Gelert is not likely to be led into difficulty very soon in the matter of street-naming. It has only very grudgingly yielded to the urban custom of calling rows of houses by a certain name, and as for numbering houses—well, the inhabitants have never seen any convenience in such a system. Every man's house is known by some special name or by the man's own name. The postman is never puzzled with numbers, and is only asked to acquaint himself with the names of three streets and as many terraces. The village contains about ninety or ninety-five houses, the majority of which form one long street, running from east to west. The eastern portion of this long strip is called Gwynant Street; the portion near the smithy is called Smith Street, and the houses from Prince Llewelyn Hotel to its western end are known by individual names. The same is true of most of the houses on the church side of the bridge—all have special names.

The street leading to the churchyard gate is the third street, so-called, and is appropriately called Church Street. A portion of this street formed part of a coloured sketch of Bedd Gelert which was published in a series of views sketched for a firm of publishers about the year 1830. From that picture, which may still be seen at the Saracen's Head Hotel, we have an idea of the condition of the village. The bridge was then much as it is now, but there was no wall separating the road and the river west of the bridge as there is at present. There does not seem to have been one on the east side, but the sketch does not enable one to be so sure about that.

In turning over the leaves of the *Cambro-Britain* (vol. iii. p. 242) for 1831, we came across the following review of the picture. "On the right, beyond the bridge, is Bond Street, and a very good street it is, if neatness and comfort constitute goodness. Mr. Thomas Jones, of Bryn Tirion, built, and, we

[1] See Pennant's *Tours in Wales*, vol. ii. p. 357 (edition 1810).

believe, christened, this same Bond Street. There is a smack of the whimsical in its nomenclature, and we must refer inquirers on that head to the respected proprietor." We are no doubt expected to laugh with the reviewer, for we can be sure that he enjoyed this little bit. But the laugh turns against him when we find that the whimsical is not in Mr. Jones's nomenclature, but in his critic's ignorance. The name of the street was not Bond Street, but Heol y Bont, which name is so common in English towns as "Bridge Street"—an exact translation.

The terraces are of quite a recent date, and are built on the modern style of workmen's cottages. The one by the vicarage gate is called Glasfryn Terrace, and the shorter of the two beyond the wooden bridge is called Meirion Terrace, and contains three houses, while the other contains ten houses, and is called Sygun Terrace.

The Bridges and Rivers.—No one seems to know when the present village bridge was built, but an anecdote which has come down to us probably gives an approximate date of its construction. It is said that a cloud broke on Moel Hebog on August 15, 1799, when most of the farmers of the neighbourhood were at the hay. The water poured down with such force that the greater part of the village bridge was swept away, and Aberglaslyn bridge was badly damaged. A man by the name of Robert Jones, Brynderwog, Llanfihangel y Pennant, was drowned in Ty Isaf—then a public-house. The church was filled to the depth of four feet, so that the books and forms were swimming to and fro; and when the water had abated a fine salmon was found under the altar. The bridge was in all probability built in its present form after that flood; and the "Bond Street picture" clearly shows arches identical in form and size with the present ones. After that time it acquired a beautiful covering of ivy, which attracted the attention of all tourists, and which drew forth a reference from all writers on Bedd Gelert. Its beauty, however, proved its ruin, and the ivy worked its way in between the stones, so that the walls had to be repaired about eight years ago.

The broad wooden bridge at the confluence of Colwyn and Gwynen was built about twenty-three years ago as a means of access to the two new terraces. The old way of crossing the river to Bryn Eglwys, Plas Tirion, and Ty Cocyn was by the causeway behind the smithy, and during floods by the Old Mill Bridge. The first bridge was built on iron piles, and the first great flood that came carried it away. The villagers would have liked to have had the bridge built from Smith Street, but the landlord of that side of the river wanted to become popular, and so refused to allow anything so convenient and reasonable.

The rivers that join their courses at this bridge spring from the slopes of Snowdon. The one that comes from the north-western direction is the Colwyn, and the other is the Gwynen or Hwynen, but which is commonly called Gwynant. The Colwyn springs from the higher lands of Ffridd Uchaf, and the Gwynen from Llyn Ffynon Las, right under the peak of Snowdon. The pool at their confluence was once much deeper than it is at present, and was known as Llyn Cymer (the Pool Cymer). Most of the present inhabitants are losing their hold of this name. From this pool downward to the sea the united stream is called Glaslyn—not because part of it springs from the lake of Llyn Ffynon Las (wrongly called Glaslyn), as so many think, but because the last large pool through which it flowed before meeting the tide—before the Portmadoc embankment was made—was called Llyn Glas.

These rivers abound with excellent trout, and salmon is frequently caught in their waters during the season. At present one only needs the permission of the tenants of the land bordering the streams to fish to one's heart's content. Lower down on the Glaslyn one may meet a water-bailiff, and must prepare himself with more than the permission of the tenants to meet him.

Public Buildings.—Next to the Church of St. Mary, the oldest public place of worship in Bedd Gelert, is the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist Chapel at the north-eastern end of the village. The first structure was built in 1794 as a home for the young church that had gradually formed itself in the

neighbourhood. The handful of Nonconformists had at this time been worshipping in Pen y Bont Uchaf—now a part of Prince Llewelyn Hotel—for a period long enough to make them feel uneasy, lest they be denied the use of the house, and so be thrown into the cold world once more. Landowners were deeply biassed against them, and their chances, to get land on which to build a chapel seemed almost nil. But the turn of circumstances promised a general election, and a hot fight in the county of Carnarvon. Lord Bulkeley and Sir Robert Williams, Plas y Nant, were contesting the seat, and votes were secured by every possible means. Sir Robert one day called upon William Williams, Ffridd Uchaf, to ask him for his vote. This farmer was a man of influence, and Sir Robert knew that if he could secure him it would mean a good number of votes. William Williams saw that his chance to make capital for "the little cause" had come, and so told Sir Robert that he would give him his vote if he would lease them a piece of land on which to build a chapel. The bargain was struck, and the only conditions laid down were that nothing more than the noble baronet's word was to be asked for in the form of legal rights. The chapel was immediately proceeded with, and was completed in the year mentioned above.

It was a small building, measuring some twenty-four by twenty-one feet, with only two pews—one on each side of the pulpit—and some benches along the walls. The families, one by one, began to bring benches of their own, and took possession of the place where they set them down. One can well imagine the need of such benches when people were expected to hold out a service seldom shorter than three hours. The floor was neither flagged nor boarded, and the earthen floor was exceedingly damp, so the people spread a thick layer of straw and bulrushes to prevent the formation of mud under their feet.

It is uncertain whether any alterations were made in the building before 1826, when great alterations were made and a heavy debt incurred, which took twenty-seven years to wipe off. By 1859 the present building was ready, which was

built at a cost of about £1000. Three houses and a stable were built behind the chapel, which now bring in an annual income for the support of the cause. The good people struggled manfully with this fresh debt, and paid off an average of £50 per annum until the whole was wiped away.

The services held are those usually held all over the country—two sermons and a Sabbath School on the Sunday, a prayer-meeting and a meeting of Christian fellowship during the week-nights, together with a number of special winter

The Vicarage.

meetings. The church has newly called the Rev. W. J. Williams to its pastorate; the late pastor, the Rev. William Ellis, died about four years ago.

The Congregational Chapel stands on the left-hand side of Smith Street, as one faces Nant Gwynen. The cause began in a stable belonging to the late R. R. Prichard, Goat Hotel, and then removed to the Club Room of "Llanciau Eryri." Special services were held to give the cause a start, and the Rev. William Rees, D.D., well known as the bard Hiraethog, together with the Rev. Robert Thomas (Ap Fychan), Bangor,

preached on the occasion. The gentleman responsible for this move was the late Rev. William Ambrose, Portmadoc, who was an ardent Congregationalist, and an able preacher, and a good poet to boot. His aim was to give Congregationalism a hold in every place in the country, however small a hold it may be. His plan in Bedd Gelert has not been a success, for the cause is still small and weak; the faithfulness of the few friends that cling to it is most praiseworthy, and this is its one redeeming feature. The present building was erected about the beginning of 1852, and was built on the site of an old stable, then in the possession of the Rev. Dd. Jones, Waterloo House, a Calvinistic Methodist preacher. One of the sisters was so full of delight at the prospect of getting a new chapel, that she joined the men in loading the carts at the quarry; and the honest zeal of old Sian Jones is typical of what has been witnessed all over Wales. Labour of love has covered Wales with similar little sanctuaries, and men and women who have had but little money with which to build them, have attained their object by giving their labours. We understand that a new building has been arranged for on the site of the old stable where the cause was first started. The design is by Mr. T. Taliesin Rees, Birkenhead.

On the right-hand side of Gwynant Street we came across the old Club Room above referred to. It has been a place of refuge for more than one homeless movement in the village. On the stone slab above the door is the following inscription:—"The Benefit Society of the men of Eryri in Bedd Gelert. Established January 1832. This house was built A.D. 1841." The Benefit Society is now extinct, and the old building is used as a warehouse.

Various.—The vicarage was built about the year 1850 or 1851. The first perpetual curate was the Rev. John Jones, B.A., and it was for him the vicarage was first erected. It is a fine house, standing on a high elevation above the road, and surrounded by an acre of ground.

Erw Fair is the name of the house standing in its own grounds on the right-hand side of the road as one walks from

the Goat Hotel to the village. It is the property of Major Walker-Jones, Chester, and is distinguished as the house occupied for about two years by the world-renowned vocalist, Mr. Sims Reeves. It was built about 1842, and is an exceedingly nice house.

Ty'r Onen is the name of a little public-house on the same side of the road as Erw Fair. This was once the stables of the Goat Hotel, and was turned into a dwelling-house by David Prichard. The Calvinistic Methodists occupied this for a short time during the renovations of 1826.

Gwyndy Bach is the small and very ancient-looking house by the Methodist Chapel. It is the only one of the very old houses that still remains in the village. It is the work of some honest sixteenth-century mason, and stands as a monument of genuine workmanship. Its broad-ledged foundations are very noticeable, and the thick walls, built as they are with mud instead of mortar, are worth a little scrutiny.

Gwyndy, or Gwyndy Mawr, is almost wiped out of the memory of the inhabitants. It stood by the roadside, at the bottom of the garden on the left of the chapel. The tenants for two generations were blacksmiths. John Williams, the second of the two blacksmiths, was a man possessed of an immense store of anecdotes and stories, and used to draw the young of the whole district to the smithy on a winter's night to listen to his tales. It is said that one William Williams, Ty Mawr, Nanmor, went into the smithy one evening to the merry company which listened to John Williams; the evening passed on like a dream, and all of a sudden William Williams remembered that his way home was right through the Pass which John Williams, in his stories, had so filled with goblins. It was now late, and he could not get company to go his way. There was nothing to do but to venture it; and when he got by the Goat Hotel he took off his clogs, put them under his arm, and ran with his whole might, until he reached Nanmor village. His speed prevented him from seeing the goblins, and so he reached home safely.

On the slope behind the Saracen's Head stood a large heap of stones, which the old inhabitants held in great reverence; but every stone has now been carried away, and nothing but a tradition of its past existence now remains.

Tradition says that a comely palace was owned by the Prior at a place called Llwyn y Prior, but there is not as much as a trace of it left. It was probably built of nature's most perishable materials. It is suggested that the large stone slab unearthed by the late William Williams, Cwm Cloch, many years ago, had something to do with it. It was not unlike a gravestone, and had distinctly inscribed letters on it; but as neither he nor any one whom he knew could read it, he cut it up for drainage purposes.

CHAPTER IV

THE VILLAGE HOTELS

The Ale-House of Ty Isaf.—One of the things that marred a stranger's visit to Bedd Gelert before the beginning of the present century was the absence of satisfactory accommodation. There were two licensed houses in the place, but not a single hotel, and temperance houses were then not thought of. One of the two taverns was Ty Ucha', or Glasdraian,—now called Saracen's Head,—and the other was Ty Isaf, which is now known as Prince Llewelyn's old house, and the scene of his rash and much-rued deed. The two made some pretence at providing the common necessaries of life when strangers asked for them, but it is almost certain, if "the testimony of the many is proof," that tourists did not find much attraction in their primitive catering.

Nicholas Owen, writing in 1792, says that "the village ale-house of Bedd Gelert, the place of rest nearest the bridge, affords no variety of accommodation; the catalogue of negatives is abundant. No butcher's meat, no wheaten bread, no

wine, no spirits; oat and barley bread, ale, porter, and eggs commonly make the improvident stranger's repast."[1]

Those of us who know something of Welsh life and notions see nothing to marvel at in the above remarks of Owen, as it was literally true of by far the majority of the rustic Welsh inns in those days. Besides, the hosts of these inns would only provide according to their own ideas of the needs of a

Ty Isaf.

man on a journey. The modern tourist was a very foreign idea to the innkeepers, and modern standards must not be applied to the taverns of a hundred years ago. Few things, too, can strike such a contrast as the ordinary Englishman's idea of touring, and that of the ordinary and typical Welshman. The *sine qua non* of the former, if he is going to get a ghost of a chance to enjoy himself, is a good meal, and the charms

[1] *Carnarvonshire, a Sketch of its History, etc.*, by the Rev. Nicholas Owen, p. 75.

of the loveliest neighbourhood stand a poor chance of persuading him to forego that blessing for their sakes. The latter, however, is amply satisfied if he gets his bare wants supplied him. He never expects to get his home comforts, even in the matter of meals, except at home, and he sets out to enjoy the main object of his tour, leaving food considerations as a matter of secondary importance.

We simply state this fact, without the slightest notion of making invidious comparisons; and Nicholas Owen shows how true a Welshman he was in this matter in the sentence next to the one quoted above: "And sufficient are these to satisfy the immediate wants of the curious." It probably never occurred to the hosts of these simple inns that their own fares were not good enough, and they therefore catered for nothing better. Their logic would probably protest in something like the following words if some one suggested to them that they ought to provide a better fare: "Surely people who come here for mere pleasure, to climb hills and see the country, do not want anything better than 'oat and barley bread, ale, porter, and eggs,' and if some one wants a bed, we can turn out of our own. It is different with people engaged in some hard work." And this is the logic of the reverend gentleman quoted above.

Ty Isaf has many things of interest connected with it. The framed picture hanging above the door, showing Llewelyn in the act of slaying his dog, indicates the importance which the villagers wish strangers to attach to it. Tradition says that Llewelyn the Great used to reside at Bedd Gelert during the hunting season, and that his mansion stood on the very spot where now stands this house. The architecture, which is that of the seventeenth century, belies the common and more recent tradition that this is the actual house. It has been under several and recent repairs, but the great thick walls of nearly three hundred years ago still remain.

Very many years ago a family of Wynns lived in it, and they seem to have been a family of some standing. We have not been able to ascertain whether it was licensed in their time; the only name which we have been able to trace as

connected with it as a public-house is that of Lowry Parry, who, to our knowledge, kept it from the years 1803-1815. It was at this house the Vestry Meetings of the parish were held during those years, and, it may be, during previous years; but the Minute Book of the meetings of previous years have not come into our hands.

The public-house of Ty Isaf was conveniently situated at the entrance of the street leading to the church. The ale-house and the church were component parts of the life of the villagers of a hundred years ago, and even much later in the largest portion of the Principality. Those coming from a distance found it a convenient and a pleasant place to while away the interval between two services, where the inhabitants of the extreme ends of the parish chatted over everything except religion. It was also convenient for the minister, for he was not thought to have sought his complete inspiration if he had not drained at least a cup or two before entering the pulpit. The people, too, knowing that body and soul must enter into religion, considered it absolutely necessary to seek as much refreshment for the physical as the spiritual man. It would never do for either shepherd or flock to have these separated far apart, as one part of the man would be at war with the other. "What God hath joined, let no man put asunder," said the people, who, at least, showed as much thirst for ale as for righteousness. Then there were the dead to be buried, and that could only be done by living men, so many of whom guarded the interests of the *complete* ceremony with such jealousy that to leave out the last item in it would mean depriving a man of Christian burial: for "after the burial is over the company retire to the public-house, where every one spends his sixpence for ale; then all ceremonies are over."[1]

One article of great interest belonged at one time to this house, and that was "Hen Beint Mawr Bedd Gelert" (The Large Pint of Bedd Gelert). It was a large pewter mug, holding exactly two quarts. In those days all the brewing was done at home, and it was customary to keep a fairly good

[1] W. Williams, Llandegai.

quantity of beer in reserve, so that the house might never run short of "old beer." Drinking feats were then only second in interest to a good fight or a heroic deed on the battle-field; and the lord of the manor agreed that whoever would drink this mugful of old beer should have it gratis, provided he strictly complied with the conditions. He was to grasp the neck of the mug with one hand, place the other hand on his back, and then drink it all at a breath. If he succeeded, the drink was charged against the lord of the manor, and deducted out of the rent; but if he failed, then he had to pay for it himself. Tradition declares that the feat was so often accomplished that the tenants seldom had to pay more than half their rent in money.

(*Drawing by Mrs. Walker-Jones, Chester.*)

We are not familiar with the history of drinking feats, but we do not think that such a thing is often done in these days. "There were giants in those days," especially if throats are tests of giants, though we doubt not that men are still made of as dry a clay as then. The "Peint Mawr" is still carefully preserved, though the scandalous stuff now retailed for beer is not drunk out of it. After Lowry Parry had gone to her rest, it was taken to the (Royal) Goat Hotel, and there left for every one's examination. It received some damage at the hotel, and some conceited coxcombs actually scratched their initials on it. When the Goat Hotel was

sold, its rightful owner took it away, and it remains in his hands at present.

We had some little trouble in ascertaining its whereabouts, but ultimately traced the place of its safe keeping. Through the kindness of Major and Mrs. Walker-Jones, Chester, we were allowed to see and examine the old relic. It bears the stamp of the Queen Anne silver, and on one side is the arms of the family,—a goat in the act of climbing a rock,—over which the following words are engraved: "Y Graig yw fy Nhrigfa" (The Rock is my Abode), and underneath are the words, "Hen Beint Mawr Bedd Gelert." On the other side we have the following words addressed to us by the mug itself:—

Fy llon'd o gwrw wrth dy fodd,
A wna mherchenog iti'n rhodd;
Os yfi'r cwbl ar ryw hynt
Yn rhwydd mewn llaw, heb gym'ryd gwynt

which we may render thus:—

My fill of beer, which makes content,
My owner will to thee present,
If, with one hand and single draught,
Thou wilt but have it wholly quaffed.

An old ruin once stood at the south end of this house, which was called Y Gegin Bach ("The Little Kitchen"). It seemed very much older than the present house; and when the tenant, William Roberts, was pulling it down, he found an old sword hidden in one of the walls. It must have been the dress-sword of a very tall man, as it has a long narrow blade, about six inches of which is broken off. Its handle is adorned with the arms of some distinguished person or family. It is now in the safe keeping of the same good hands as the old pewter pint, and, like the mug, was removed from the Goat Hotel some twenty-two years ago.

The William Roberts above referred to was Lowry Parry's son; he shared with the sons of the Goat Hotel the respect of the parishioners as one possessing the rare accomplishment of being quite conversant with the English language. After his mother's death he gave up the license of the house, and,

though it still offers refreshments of a simple order to the weary stranger, it has never since provided the cup that intoxicates. Strangers are freely admitted to inspect the interesting old structure, which may be so easily identified by the help of the picture above the door.

The Saracen's Head.—The village name for this house is Ty Ucha', and it is only the younger generation of the inhabitants who think of using the later name. Ty Ucha' proper is really only a part of the present house; all to the right of the main entrance, including the wide hall, was added some thirty years ago. The old house very much resembled the aged house by the chapel, called Gwyndy Bach, and the lower part of the building, on the left of the main entrance, represents the old structure. Its thick walls suggest a time anterior to three hundred years ago, and it speaks well for the mud-mortar of those times that the old walls not only stand, but also support the great weight of the additional pile. Of its primitive internal arrangements very few traces remain. The house has an older name than even Ty Ucha'. When speaking to an old lady of eighty years of age, a few weeks since, about this house, she found it more familiar to her memory to call it Glasdraian. This, it seems, was the name of the farm long before it was a licensed house, and the name Ty Ucha' (Upper House) was only given to it to distinguish it from Ty Isa' (the Lower House).

There is a tradition that the house and farm were once known as Maes y Llan (the Open Field of the Church), and that both this and Gwyndy—a house long ago demolished—belonged to the Prior. It was here he held his ecclesiastical courts, and it is quite probable that it was from this Maes y Llan, Bishop Anian dated his letter to Edward I. on behalf of the priory. The field above the house is called "Y Maes" to this day, and the grove on the hill overlooking Saracen's Head is called Llwyn y Llan (the Church Grove). After the dissolution the property passed into the hands of the Rowlandses, Plas y Nant, and on the marriage of their last heiress with one of the Bulkeleys, it passed into the hands of the Baronets of Baron Hill, Anglesey.

We cannot say when the license was joined to the farm, but conjecture a date somewhere near the middle of the eighteenth century. Bingley's description of the house, from his experience in it during the summer of 1798, is quite good enough to be called an exaggerated story, though we have no desire to modify his statements. When he returned in 1801 "several material improvements" had been introduced, "in consequence of Mr. Jones of Bryntirion having begun to build a comfortable house for the reception of travellers on the other side of the river, at a few hundred yards' distance."

Saracen's Head.

The first name which is now remembered in connection with the tenancy of this house is that of Captain Roberts, whose daughter married David Prichard, the second son of the first host of the Goat Hotel. After Captain Roberts's death, Prichard carried on the business, but ultimately left it in the hands of his mother and his bachelor brother Robert. The old lady died in 1844, and her son followed her two years afterwards. The next name we find here is that of Robert Owen, a man from Anglesey, who developed the business and got the house rebuilt. About twenty-two years ago the late Mr. Rice Williams removed here from Tremadoc, and Mrs. Williams is now left in sole charge.

After Ty Isaf had ceased to be a public-house, several of

the vestry meetings had been held at, or adjourned to, the Goat Hotel; but from 1849 to 1869 they were held, with almost unbroken regularity, at Ty Uchaf. It seems that the Rev. John Jones, B.A., the first perpetual curate of Bedd Gelert, was responsible for the change.

The old sign of years ago was an artistic one, decorated with the head of a Turk in his well-known red turban. At present there is only the bold and clear letters "Saracen's Head Hotel," partly covered over in summer by the creepers which adorn the front. Mrs. Williams is a very kind and genial hostess, ever ready to devote every attention on those who call in passing through the village, as well as on those who stay for a week or a season.

The Visitors' Album of the Saracen's Head is not such an institution as those to be found in the other houses of the village, but it is second to none of them in point of interest. There are two quotations which we are anxious to make from it—one in a later chapter, on "The Legend of Gelert," and the following, which airs the antiquarian :—

"Llewelyn's House"

"The 'reputed mansion' of Prince Llewelyn has won its reputation on undoubted false pretensions. It is probably a portion of the Priory, which formerly stood on the site, and which is said to have been founded by Llewelyn himself. The building is certainly of later date than the time of the Prince himself, but there is no need to disbelieve the tradition that the Prince's house may be found in the village. An examination of the site of Gelert's grave points at once to the probability of the 'mansion' being found nearer the tomb of the faithful hound than the present claimant to that honour. The building now degraded to use as a cowhouse shows all the signs of a far more ancient structure than the 'reputed mansion.' The back of the house is half-buried in the mound against which it stands, and shows thereby the survival of strong troglodytic tendencies of the builders, whoever they may have been, of this erection. The lower masonry work is of decidedly

cyclopean construction, and the shape of the door-opening shows the same feeling. The upper part has probably been altered by late repairs and additions, but there can be no doubt that the main body of the building is decidedly anterior to the thirteenth century, and so, not improbably, the residence of the princes of this district. Slightly corroborative evidence may be found in the propinquity of the 'grave' to the house; for when the Prince had the misfortune to kill his hound, he is hardly likely to have carried the corpse all the distance from the 'reputed mansion' to the 'grave,' but would rather have buried it in the garden at the rear of the house."

"H. M., 31/7/86."

These are grave observations, but they provoke within us an irresistible desire to smile.

There is an air of quaintness about the Saracen's Head, and its pieces of old furniture and simple pictures make it very interesting. In the hall, on an old dresser, are two rush candle-holders, which recall the time when our forefathers found

> Early to bed and early to rise
> Make a man healthy, wealthy, and wise,

a convenient maxim, since the rush candles were poor things for lengthening out short days.

The Royal Goat Hotel.—Just a hundred years ago this district began to acquire a position of favour among the holiday resorts of the mountainous districts of Wales, and its lack of accommodation for tourists at once became marked. The proprietor of "this romantic place" on the western side of the Colwyn and Glaslyn was Thomas Jones, Esq., of Bryntirion, near Bangor, a gentleman of liberal and patriotic spirit, more anxious to serve his generation than himself. Bedd Gelert had been reproached more than once for the wretchedness of its accommodations, and Mr. Jones determined to wipe away its reproach by building a new inn, which would render "to the tourist and the traveller the most attractive, as well as the most comfortable accommodations." Having come into his property through his wife—a lady descended from the well-

known Hengwrt family—he looked upon his acquired estate as a trust which had been handed over to him for the purpose of improvement. He spared no expense in bringing the hotel into favour, and that immediate success followed is proved by the uniformly eulogistic reminiscences of visitors.

The erection of the Goat Hotel was begun in the year 1800, and it was not completed until the beginning of 1802. Bingley made his second tour through this district in the year 1801, and was greatly relieved at finding that tourists would soon have no excuse for enduring what he had gone through during his first visit. "Nothing, in this state of the house (Ty Uchaf), could possibly have induced a traveller to remain here through the night but the exquisite scenery around the place. In my second journey I found several improvements, in consequence of Mr. Jones of Bryntirion having begun to build a comfortable house for the reception of travellers on the other side of the river, at a few hundred yards' distance. This now affords excellent accommodation."[1] Not very long ago, while making some alterations in the kitchen, a copper coin (halfpenny) was found on the top sash of each of the three windows, bearing the date 1806, one of which is still in the possession of Mr. Knight. This kitchen was probably an addition made at that time.

Nicholson[2] quotes the remarks of an artist, which, having regard to Bingley's severe criticism and complaints, ought not to be omitted. "The new inn," says Pugh, "is the most fashionable, but I prefer the old one, that I might enjoy a quiet undisturbed hour, which an artist knows how to appreciate. The accommodations were good, with civil attentions." The success of the Goat Hotel had roused the proprietors of the old house into a sense of their opportunities, and the two houses co-operated in making Bedd Gelert attractive.

The first name given to this house was "Bedd Gelert Hotel," with a sign over the door "of a goat clambering

[1] Bingley's *North Wales*, p. 250.
[2] *Cambrian Travellers' Guide* (edition 1840).

among the mountains of Snowdon."[1] "It is distinguished," says Nicholson, "by the emblem of the Goat, with the following appropriate motto: *Patria mea petra*, My country is a rock." When the name "Bedd Gelert Hotel" was replaced by "Goat Hotel" we have no means of ascertaining, but the above quotations give us a clue to the cause of the change. A legend of recent origin has been pinned on to the latter name, which purports to explain how the hotel came to be

The Royal Goat Hotel.

called by that name. When the Hon. W. R. Spencer visited Bedd Gelert with his friend W. A. Madocks, Esq., he saw a solitary goat perched on one of the high and narrow ledges of the Pass of Aberglaslyn, and the sight so struck him that he persuaded Mr. Thomas Jones, Bryntirion, to build a hotel and call it by the name of "The Goat," to indicate the nature of the country around. But, unfortunately for this tradition, the hotel was not called by that name, as the evidence proves,

[1] Bingley's *North Wales*, p. 250.

until very many years after its erection. "The goat clambering among the mountains" was the crest of the Bryntirion family, and was placed over the door of the Bedd Gelert Hotel by the special permission of Mr. Thomas Jones. As other hotels sprang up within the village it became far more convenient for strangers to refer to each one by a distinctive name, as each had a right to the appellation "Bedd Gelert Hotel"; and the emblem on the sign gave this hotel the new name of the "Goat Hotel."

We cannot imagine which of the distinguished family of the Fychans changed the old Welsh motto into the Latin one. It is evident that the Latin rendering was adopted more for its alliteration than for its faithfulness to the original. To ninety-nine out of every hundred tourists it simply represents what Nicholson has made of it—a Welshman's description of his native land. A whole coachful of tourists seemed amply satisfied with the translation and explanation which a fellow-traveller, in his ignorance of its connection, once gave in our hearing. "My native land is rocky. Ah! Taffy need not have told us that; we have known it to our cost." Some one added, "And pleasure." "Hm! yes, if you like, but why should they go to the trouble of sticking that up in Latin?" One might have answered, "To give pedants some shadow of an excuse for their superior loquacity"; but we knew that the Latin had no business there. The motto is that which we have on the "Peint Mawr," and is put into the mouth of the goat, "Y Graig yw fy Nhrigfa" (lit. The rock is my habitation).

The first landlord of the hotel, David Prichard, hailed from South Wales, and was brought into these parts by the attractions of the young lady whom he married. Mrs. Prichard was the daughter of Bwlch Mwrchan, and had met her husband while in service at Craig y Don in Anglesey. They had been married a few years before the hotel was built, and one child at least was born to them before the close of the last century. He was a good man of business, and ever ready to lay hold of every opportunity of improving his position. The skill with which he used the Gelert legend for the purpose of increasing

his own business and for making popular his adopted little village will command the admiration of generations of tourists yet to be born. His good wife made an excellent hostess, and her homely, genial manner gave the greatest satisfaction to those who stayed at the hotel. The people of the village, and the parish generally, held the happy pair in high esteem, as the respect with which they are spoken of to this day amply proves.

David Prichard died in February 1821, in the fifty second year of his age, and left his affairs in the hands of his wife and his eldest son, John. About three years afterwards John got married, and the old lady found a real daughter in the woman of his choice. When her son David and his wife removed from the "Saracen's Head" to Tanybwlch, she took her son Robert with her there, and left the Goat Hotel to John and his wife. John had been educated for the law, and had duly qualified himself as a solicitor, though, as far as we know, he never practised. He, like his father, had excellent business capacities, and he not only maintained, but greatly increased, the reputation of the hotel. Two additions were found necessary during his tenancy. He also took a great deal of interest in public affairs, and did many a good turn for the parish by turning his legal knowledge into use whenever the vestry had to deal with intricate matters. He died in the flower of his days, in the year 1846, at the age of forty-seven. His wife, who was just a year his junior, lived until the year 1861.

After the late Mr. R. R. Prichard had taken the reins into his hands the premises had to be enlarged, and the present coffee-room was added to the house, and the coach houses were built anew. Some time before his death in 1866 he had retired to Erw Fair, and it is as Robert Prichard, Erw Fair, his gravestone marks his resting-place. A Mr. Humphreys then managed the place, and he was followed by a Mr. Lewis, who soon made room for Mr. Thomas, the father of the late Mr. Rhys Thomas, the first husband of Mrs. Knight. About seven years ago Mr. Knight joined hands with the present proprietress, and with his help and her own genial and willing

service, Mrs. Knight keeps up the traditions of this well-established hotel. The hotel, we believe, is owned by a Liverpool Company, for whom Mr. Banner acts as director.

The Goat Hotel has provided accommodation for very distinguished guests from time to time. When Prince Arthur, now Duke of Connaught, visited these parts he stayed at this hotel, and the older inhabitants have a very vivid recollection of that occasion. His arrival was expected, and the approximate time of his coming was known, so that every preparation for a right royal welcome had been made. The whole village had gone out to receive him as he drove into the place in a four-horse carriage, as they thought; but how duped all were when they found that he had arrived almost unobserved. He had journeyed from Tanybwlch, and had sent the carriage back from the Aberglaslyn Pass, choosing to walk from there to the village and enjoy the scenery as he went. Some two gentlemen and a young lad had been seen approaching along the path through the field of Gelert's grave, but no one ever dreamt of finding a prince and a pedestrian in one, so that he succeeded, as he desired, to avoid any kind of demonstration. In the evening, however, the village choir gave him an open-air concert, and sang some Welsh hymns and a selection of our immortal Welsh airs, with which His Royal Highness was immensely pleased.

Another distinguished guest was the late Duke of Newcastle, whose fondness for Bedd Gelert was not much short of a passion. His love of horses and hunts was the means of giving the district a little excitement once or twice a year in the shape of an otter or a fox hunt. With some sections of the community he was very popular, but some of the sturdy old Christians of the place looked upon him as rather a graceless gentleman. His great sin was his disregard for the Sabbath, and in a Welsh village nothing could have been more of an offence. It was a great eye-sore to the people to see a gentleman, dressed in anything but quiet colours, going out for a ride on the Sunday, whistling a merry tune as he jogged along. But his practice was ultimately discontinued, and the old woman who brought home to him the wickedness

of his way is spoken of to this day as one who had the root of the matter in her.

His Grace was going out for his usual ride one Sabbath day, and met the old woman going to the Sabbath School with her New Testament in her hand. Something within her roused her indignation at the Duke's shameless Sabbath-breaking, and as she could not remonstrate with him in the English tongue, she indignantly shook her New Testament at him, and told him in Welsh that he would certainly rue his wickedness. The Duke understood the gesture, and was deeply impressed with the righteously indignant expression of the old Christian's face; he soon returned to the hotel, and told the hostler to put his horse in the stable, as he would not want it on Sunday again.

In November 1851 Lord John Russell came for a few days to Bedd Gelert, and stayed at the Goat Hotel; but as his visit is connected with an incident which is to be related in another chapter, we need not do more than mention the fact here.

Derwent Coleridge made his headquarters at this hotel, finding nothing more refreshing to his wearied mind than the delightful seclusion of this charming spot. One of his visits is still vividly recalled by Mr. Richard Owen ("Glaslyn"), who then kept a bookseller's shop and a circulating library in the village. Derwent Coleridge went into his shop one morning and saw a copy of the *Traethodydd* (*Essayist*)—a Welsh quarterly—in which an article on "The Philosophy and Theology of Coleridge" was printed. This article caught the eye of the editor of the complete edition of the works of Coleridge, and he at once became inquisitive. After getting a few particulars about the author of the article he took the copy to the hotel, and before very long came back in great haste. He had been intensely interested and delighted with the essay, and eagerly sought more particulars about the writer of such a glowing article. Then Glaslyn gave him several facts about the late Dr. Lewis Edwards, the father and predecessor of the Rev. Thomas Charles Edwards, M.A., D.D., the present Principal of Bala Theological College. "I

must certainly try and make the acquaintance of this great man," said Derwent Coleridge, "for this is by far the best thing I have ever seen on Coleridge's philosophy and theology. By the way, do you know who the subject of this eulogy was?" continued he. "I have read that article, sir," said Glaslyn, "and I know he was an excellent poet." "Yes, and you may be interested to know that he was my father." He seemed as if the appreciation of his father's works by one of the greatest of Welsh thinkers had brought a flood of joy into his heart. Great names still adorn the visitors' album, some of which were inserted before fame had linked itself with them: but to make a selection from among them for insertion would be both difficult and invidious.

The large shrubbery in front of the hotel hides the front view from the lower rooms; but the fine open space between the house and that pretty enclosure gives the hotel an imposing appearance. It is in this square that the Carnarvon and the Bettws y Coed coaches draw up after their beautiful drives from their respective starting-places. The old lady-postman of Nanmor, with her fossils, photographs, and knitting-work, graces the spot beneath the old oak-tree during certain hours of each week-day in the summer, clad in a neat and genuine Welsh costume, which is not put on for the season, but which she habitually wears. Should any one hear some of the inhabitants speaking of "the inn" (often pronounced "yr ing"), he should remember that the Goat Hotel—after the visit of Prince Arthur, the *Royal* Goat Hotel—is meant.

The Prince Llewelyn Hotel.—This house has absorbed three of the older buildings of the village, though two only are represented by the actual building, the third having been cleared away for the construction of the little flower-garden at the end of the house. The part next to the Post Office was once occupied by a cooper called William Prichard. He had built the greater part of it, but his landlord did not hesitate to turn him out without even a farthing compensation, and then let it as a public house. The part next to the flower garden was called Pen y Bont Fawr, a house which figures prominently in the early history of the Calvinistic Methodist cause within

the parish. The house which was swept away for the formation of a garden was called Pen y Bont Fach.

The present building was erected a little more than sixty years ago, though the coffee-room and some bedrooms were added about thirty years ago. The property is owned by Robert Morris, Esq., M.D., Norwich and Bedd Gelert, who also owns the greater part of the village. The house is exceedingly well-conducted, and has a long-standing reputation for making people comfortable. Indeed, judging from the mass of eulogistic matter in prose and poetry left in the three

Bedd Gelert Bridge. Prince Llewelyn Hotel.

visitors' albums which were kindly lent us, we should even say that its comforts have been the means of inducing many to make repeated visits to the district. One gentleman, Mr. W. R. Emslie, London, counts his visits by the tens, and looks upon the hotel as a kind of second home. The district is indebted to him for his excellent map of the neighbourhood, made on the basis of the Ordnance Map.

The license of this house was first granted to a man of the name of John Roberts, who was called "John Roberts y Mail" because he drove the mail car between Carnarvon and Bedd Gelert. He was succeeded by Robert Roberts, of

whose life we know nothing. After him came the late Mr. David Jones, a stone-mason and contractor, and his tenancy began as far back as sixty years ago. He took no interest whatever in the hotel as such, at least in the earlier years of his tenancy, but devoted his energies to his own occupation and calling, with marked success. His daughter, however, made double amends for his indifference, for she won the praises of hundreds of visitors, who have left poetic effusions in all kinds of metres lauding her attentiveness and her attractions. Mr. Rowland Jones, son of Mr. David Jones, succeeded his father, and his widow is still at the head of affairs, carrying on the business with the willing help of her children. Mrs. Jones has a conveyance running twice every day, all the year round, between Bedd Gelert and Portmadoc.

Distinguished guests have left their signatures in the albums; and among their number we found those of the Rev. A. and Mrs. M'Laren of Manchester, who left their names on 14th July, 1870. Some twenty years previous, the Rev. Frederick Temple, M.A., and his sister had stayed in the house, and had found Bedd Gelert one of the most congenial spots, both on account of its scenery and its quaint people. One of the daughters of John Jones, Kingsley's great favourite, happened to be the nurse of the Prince Llewelyn Hotel family at the time, and she seems to have greatly pleased the present Archbishop by her attention and unconscious kindness. On leaving, Dr. Temple gave her a handsome "tip," and promised that she should hear further from him. In a few days a parcel arrived, containing several volumes of Kingsley's writings, with the signature of her well-wisher Fred. Temple. The happy recipient, who valued these books more than she would a fortune, has long been dead, but the gift still affords immense pleasure to the brothers and sisters who have lived to see their sister's kind well-wisher promoted to the See of Canterbury.

We have already referred to the poetry of the visitors' albums; very little of it will ever see the light of day, and the world has no reason to grieve over the fact. There are four lines, however, which express a very general sentiment

with admirable simplicity, and which, for the sake of the house and tourists in general, ought not to be omitted from our pages :—

To tired tourists I would say,
At "Prince Llewelyn" come and stay ;
Here's sumptuous fare at moderate price,
And everything is clean and nice.

F. J. Elliot, London.

The Colwyn Temperance Hotel.—There are several temperance houses in Bedd Gelert, but the only temperance hotel is "The Colwyn Hotel." This house was converted into a hotel in the year 1879 by Mr. Humphrey Jones, who is still in evidence as its obliging landlord. Previously it was a bookseller's shop and a circulating library, which Glaslyn, the bard and litterateur, managed and controlled. It was from here the visitors used to get the cream of English and Welsh literature to while away the long hours of a rainy day. The books which were always out, and in impatient demand, were Kingsley's *Two Years Ago* and Borrow's *Wild Wales*.

After Glaslyn left, some one took the house as a private dwelling, but remained in it only for a very short time. It has been enlarged since then, and thoroughly rearranged for its present purpose. Mr. Jones does a good deal of posting, and keeps a conveyance, which runs to and fro twice every day on the panoramic road between Bedd Gelert and Portmadoc. The inner business is left to Mrs. Jones, whose catering and kindness never fail to give satisfaction. This house, too, has its "Visitors' Album," in which visitors have recorded their impressions with holiday-like candour and freedom. "All that could be desired from home." "The kindest hostess we have met in our North Wales tour, and we wish her and hers every good." "A quite comfortable hotel in an entrancing neighbourhood." These are samples of entries which are frequently repeated in various forms. Another sample :—

The price is right, the quality prime,
And a varied sight from a garden climb ;
A place of rest, a home from home,
One of the best to those who roam.

What would —— take for writing the following, if he had been caught and confined by the rain at Bedd Gelert, during his journalistic days: "The Editor of an English Daily Journal spent a night here, and was pleasantly surprised at the moderation of the charges. Unfortunately, it was the only pleasure he had, the weather being execrable." It is no

Colwyn Hotel.

small thing to find "moderation" among the pleasures of a journalist; the expletives having reference to the "execrable weather" are not recorded. It would be interesting to have a definition of "a tourist." It is evident from the following words that he objects to being considered a man. "A good

wife is Heaven's last best gift to man, and a good fine day is Heaven's last best gift to a Tourist." If the capital letter stands for anything, the tourist is the greater of the two. Should the weather prove unfavourable for rambling, the visitor might find a lot to amuse him in this book, but his amusement must be paid for by an entry of his own.

Come look at my visitors,
But learn ere you look,
That all are expected
To add to my book.
You may quiz if you please,
But the penalty is
That you likewise leave something
For others to quiz.

The Colwyn boasts of the patronage of several Cycle, Cricket, and Ramblers' Clubs, Touring Parties, etc., all of whom pay the penalty of "leaving something to quiz." During last summer we met here two gentlemen from Farnworth who had joined the large annual party which Thomas Alldred, Esq., personally conducts every year. After entering into conversation with them, they explained that their party had gone to Criccieth, and that they had been prevented from going with it by the health of a little lad who was with them. We expressed a regret that we were not in time to meet the worthy conductor of the party, and asked if they would be good enough to send us an account of the trip. Our wish was conveyed to Mr. Alldred, who sent us a printed account of the whole tour, together with a kind letter, from which we make the following quotation: "My knowledge of the place and district extends now over close upon twenty years, and I think, without egotism, that I may claim to have introduced more visitors to it from Lancashire than any other person. My 'Christian Workers' Parties' have grown larger every year, and all are of opinion that Bedd Gelert's beautiful situation and scenery are rarely excelled, if equalled, by any other spot in the United Kingdom." The party consisted of 114, which was divided equally between the Colwyn and the Saracen's Head.

CHAPTER V

THE LEGEND OF GELERT

Its Popularity.—The legend of Llewelyn and his dog Gelert is the most popular legend connected with Wales. This is perhaps the only Welsh legend universally known, and the credit of spreading it so widely must be divided —no matter in what proportion —between the talent and sympathy of the Hon. W. R. Spencer and the generosity of Nature. It was Spencer who first gave it the vehicle of verse, and no sooner did the public begin to read his spirited ballad than they began to inquire about the story upon which it was founded. The next step was to know something of the place with which it was connected, and to make a pilgrimage to the sacred spot. This was all that was needed, for people soon began to read another story—the story which Nature has been eloquently relating through the centuries —of health, of beauty, and of grandeur. This story has also spread, and hundreds upon hundreds, from all parts, flock to the scene every year. By now hundreds visit Bedd Gelert who have never read Spencer's poem until they have reached the place. They come on the tide of fashion to visit a place that is classic in the list of "places worth seeing," and read the story at some one's recommendation as something calculated to clothe the spot with new interests.

We have thus two effectual and supplementary means of spreading the pathetic story, which drives home one of the most frequently needed lessons of life. It is necessary to have the two. It is the fame which its charms have won for Bedd Gelert that brings a large number to the place. They have no sentiment of the kind that would stir them to make pilgrimages, though they may feel an interest in the tale as one connected with a place noted also for its delightful surroundings. Scores of people, on the other hand, have

poor eyes for natural grandeur and beauty, who, nevertheless, have good eyes for tears and good hearts for pilgrimages, and feel glad that facilities enable them, without much sacrifice, to see the resting-place of the noble and faithful dog. Both classes may be daily met with in these parts. It is not long since a gentleman was telling us that he was anxious to see Bedd Gelert, and that he did not know how to arrange his time so as to go there. "Yes," we remarked, "you certainly ought to see Bedd Gelert; it is a very beautiful place." "Well," he replied, "as far as the beauty of the place is concerned, I am not so anxious, but I *should* like to see that poor dog's grave." We noticed that he looked subdued, and wore black.

There are several versions of the tale, the oldest known to us being that given in the *Iolo MSS.* volume of the Welsh MS. Society (p. 561).

The Iolo MSS. Version.—"There lived formerly at Abergarwan, a man and wife, who had a son, and he was their only child, an infant in his cradle. One day, when his wife was gone to attend her devotions, the man heard the cry of hounds on his land, in full chase after a stag. 'I will go to meet them,' said he, 'that I may, as lord of the land, get the share due to me of the stag.' And away he went, leaving his child in the cradle, and near the cradle lay his Greyhound. Whilst the man was absent in the field, a Wolf entered the house, and would have killed and devoured the child; but the Greyhound fought hard with the Wolf: and after a long and bloody struggle, and many wounds and bruises, he at last succeeded in killing him. It so happened that during the struggle the cradle was by some means or other overturned, and it lay on the ground with its face downwards. When the man returned to the house, the Greyhound, covered with blood, got up to welcome his master, and showed symptoms of joy at his return by shaking his head and wagging his tail. But the man, when he discovered blood on the Greyhound and a pool of blood on the floor, thought that the Greyhound had killed his only child; and so, in a fit of rage and distraction, he thrust the Greyhound through with his sword,

and killed him. But when he went to the cradle, and had turned it up, and found his child alive and unhurt, and saw the Wolf lying dead by the side of the cradle, and that the Greyhound had been mangled and torn by the teeth of the Wolf, he became almost frantic with grief. Hence arose the proverbs: 'Before revenge, first know the cause,' and 'Reflect twice before striking once.' This circumstance gave rise to the following expressions: 'As sorry as the man who killed his Greyhound'; 'A hasty act is not a prudent act, but like the man who killed his Greyhound.'"

"The man who suffers his passion to get the better of his prudence will commit an act which he will never be able to undo, and as long as he lives it will cause him painful sorrow. It is well for a man to bridle his rage lest he should avenge himself unjustly, like the Man who killed his Greyhound."

Glasynys's Version.—The translation of Spencer's verses by Daniel Ddu o Geredigion, which was published in *Y Brython* for February 1859, was prefaced by a prose version of the Gelert legend. The excellence of the translation, and the "matter-of-course" way in which the story was given before it, led to some correspondence on the subject; and one correspondent, in the April number of that monthly, pointed out the fact that versions of the tale were related in almost every civilised country, and that it was claimed by each as its own; and he then quotes the Iolo MSS. version. To save our priority of claim, Glasynys promptly produces the following version, which, on being challenged as to the genuineness of "the old manuscript" from which he said it had been taken, he vouched to be taken from an old MS. book by Ieuan Brydydd Hir.[1] Glasynys was a great friend of the grandson of David Prichard, R. R. Prichard, who was landlord of the Royal Goat Hotel at the time, to whom he dedicates his poem on "Llewelyn and his Dog" in the same number.

"*As Repentant as the Man who Killed his Greyhound*" (Proverb).

"Llewelyn, the son of Iorwerth Drwyndwn, sometimes

[1] *Y Brython*, vol. iii. p. 114.

called 'Llewelyn the Great,' was a brave prince of the twelfth century. He and his family were accustomed to spend their summers in Eryri, and while there delighted themselves in the innocent sports of the Welsh of those days. Hunting the roe, the fox, the hare, etc., were considered excellent pastimes in olden times. The Prince had an affectionate dog, by the name of Gelert, which was looked upon as the leader of every chase. One day, however, when they had gone out for a day's enjoyment, Gelert could not be seen among the dogs. They could not make out what had become of him. While they were out the nurse took it into her head to visit Ogof Ddu, on the side of Moel Hebog, taking one of the servants, probably, with her. When Llewelyn and his retinue were returning home, close by the mansion Gelert ran to meet him, covered with blood and wagging his tail. The Princess fainted, the Prince rushed into the nursery; but alas! when they entered, the place was streaming with blood and the cradle was turned upside down, leaving no signs of the child. Infuriated, Llewelyn seized his sword and drove it through poor Gelert, who gave a loud yell and died. The dying yell of the dog awoke the child. One of the monks ran to the cradle, lifted up the coverings, and raised up the child in the presence of the onlookers, whole and hale. Lifting up the blankets, they discovered beneath a great ravenous-looking wolf, terrible to behold even as a lifeless carcass. But the poor dog was now as dead as he, and the Prince was mourning in a flood of tears this adornment of faithfulness—Gelert. He commanded that the dog should be buried with honour in a verdant spot near by, and caused a large stone to be placed on his grave to mark his resting-place.

(*J. Thomas, Liverpool, Photo.*)
Glasynys.

The stone remains to this day in Dol y Lleian, near the village, which, together with the whole parish, was after this called Bedd Gelert."—(*From an old manuscript.*)

The above is our own free rendering of Glasynys's version, from which we have omitted one irrelevant sentence.

A Sanskrit Parallel.—The Rev. W. Pryse, a Welsh missionary once labouring under the Calvinistic Methodist Missionary Society in Sylhet, India, wrote two long and able articles for *Y Traethodydd* (*The Essayist*) of 1860 on "The Modern Literature of the Hindoos." He had learned Sanskrit and studied its literature—especially its ethical, mystical, and medical literature—pretty thoroughly. In the second of the articles referred to he says: "The only ethical work in the language is the *Pancha Tantra*, and the *Hitopadesh* is an abbreviation of that work. Many of its stories are very interesting and amusing, and some of its morals are very sensible. We may be excused, perhaps, for quoting one as an example. We select the last in the book. We do not know what the kind inhabitants of Carnarvonshire will think of their story of Bedd Gelert when they compare this with it. There is such a striking resemblance between it and that of Prince Llewelyn and his Gelert that we are tempted to think one of the parties must have borrowed it from the other. We will not undertake to decide which. This is the story:—

"A Brahmin by the name of Mahava lived in the city of Oujein. The Brahmin was in charge of his new-born babe while his wife was gone to fulfil the ceremonies pertaining, according to custom, to her purification. Soon after departure the King sent for the Brahmin to serve in the Parvana Shradha, or the ceremonies in honour of his ancestors. The Brahmin reasoned thus within himself: 'I am poor, and if I do not go at once some one else will go and will take my portion; there is a saying, "The substance of a task that ought to be done but is put off will be swallowed up of time, whether it be in giving or receiving." But I have no one to look after my child, unless indeed I give its charge to my dear weasel (Nakula), which is almost as dear to me as my child.' He determined to do so, and started off for the royal palace.

"Soon after he had gone, the weasel (or ichneumon) could see a black snake creeping by, not far from the child, and made for it. It tore the snake to pieces, and then devoured it. When the Brahmin returned, the affectionate weasel ran to meet him, rolled itself about his legs, with feet and mouth covered with blood. 'It has eaten my child,' thought the terrified Brahmin, and with one angry blow he struck the weasel dead before him. He then hurried off to the place where the child lay, and saw that it was alive and well, and perceived the remains of the serpent scattered all around the cradle, a proof of the virtues and faithfulness of the weasel. Who can imagine or describe his grief at the sight which presented itself to him!

"The moral which the story points out, according to Vishnu Surma, is," says Mr. Pryse: "*Whoever gives place to wrath before he has found out other virtues will be overtaken by bitter grief.*"

Mr. Baring-Gould's Criticism.—The Sanskrit "parallel" quoted above is only one out of a very large number of similar tales, as Mr. Baring-Gould has pointed out in his *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages* (p. 134, etc.). It has taken its various forms from the peculiar circumstances of each country into which it has found its way, but all point out the same moral. The tracing of the parallels seems to have given no small delight to the critics of folk-lore, and Mr. Baring-Gould does not conceal the fact that it is a matter of high glee to him to have a blow at "that man of straw"—popular belief. "Having demolished," says he, "the story of the famous shot of William Tell, I proceed to the destruction of another article of popular belief." Mr. Man-of-Straw number two is made to stand as erect as possible before his assailant with the words, "How can we doubt the facts, seeing that the place, Beth Gellert (*sic*), is named after the dog, and that the grave is still visible?" He knocks him down with a fatal blow and drags his body across countries and continents, as that of a fox is drawn to form a trail for young fox-hounds.

Welshmen have nothing but gratitude to offer Mr. Baring-Gould for "tracking this myth under the Gellert form from

India to Wales," because he has only done in the English tongue what Welshmen have been doing a little less elaborately in the vernacular. We have, however, to point out that he has given his readers as insipid a version of the Gelert story as any one possibly could, and that thereby he conceals the best side of the dog's character, as well as some essential points in the Welsh localisation which he adopts. All we have in the *Curious Myths* version is the dog's bravery and conscious joy at having done something which he was sure would please his master. If Mr. Baring-Gould will only compare his version with that of Spencer's poem, he will see that he has omitted to give the dog his due importance in the summer amusements of Llewelyn, and so has no room for a reference to the dog's studied absence from the chase, which was owing to his wonderful presentiment of coming danger—an essential feature of the story as connected with Llewelyn. It is here that we are made to understand Llewelyn's disappointment in the hunt, which again made him unnaturally hasty and ready to think evil of, and be angry with, Gelert. It is absurd to give the tale without this, and still more absurd to say that Llewelyn trusted Gelert "to watch the cradle of his baby son whilst he himself was absent." He would not need to leave his baby son in charge of the dog when servants were engaged for the purpose; nor would Llewelyn go to the hunt and designedly leave his best dog behind him. Had Mr. Baring-Gould given the Iolo MSS. version and connected the tale with a farmer, whose wife had gone from home, and who had no one but his dog to look after his child, the case would have been different, as that story does not mark anything strange in the dog's conduct. In that case the man only joins the hunt when it has unexpectedly come into his own fields; and his dog is not represented as "a noble deer-hound" kept for the chase, as Llewelyn's dog is.

We also strongly object to such spelling as Be*th*, Ge*ll*ert, Llewe*ll*yn. Is it unreasonable to expect English writers to acquaint themselves with such easy and simple matters as the sound and meaning of Welsh words and letters before they

use them? "Beth" does not mean, and never did mean, "a grave." The only Welsh word of that form is a mutation of "Peth," as "pa beth" or "beth" (= what). The Welsh word for grave is "Bedd," the "dd" being sounded like the English soft "th" in "they." Then "ll" has a peculiar sound of its own, and is quite different from "l"; it is not a case of doubling a consonant on account of an added syllable, as in the case of "chat," "chatter." It is a distinct letter of the Welsh alphabet, and is sounded like the old English "hl" in "hlâf" (loaf), "hlaford" (lord), "hlaedder" (ladder), etc. Llewelyn would object to being called Llewe*ll*yn just as Mr. Baring-Gould would object to being called Mr. Barring-Gold. Llewelyn means "a lion-like foe," and Llewe*ll*yn (if such a name conveyed sense) means "a lion-like razor."

Mr. Joseph Jacobs's Criticism.—In his admirable volume of selections of *Celtic Fairy Tales*, Mr. Joseph Jacobs gives a paraphrase of the ballad by Spencer; and the ideas which the Welsh mind associates with the story are thus presented to us. In a long note of some five pages at the end of the volume (p. 259, etc.) he grapples with the problem of the manner in which the story became connected with Bedd Gelert. It is evident from almost every statement he makes that he is writing after making many inquiries and consultations, both with men and books; but the note is full of careless spellings and quotations, and makes one think that neither revision nor proof-reading was attended to. "Bedd Gelert," "Bedd Ge*ll*ert," and "Be*th* Ge*ll*ert" are used without discrimination; Pennant's *Tours* are dated 1770, while Pennant's first volume did not appear until 1778, and the second not until 1781. It is said that Bingley's 1800 edition does not mention the Gelert legend; but turning to volume i., p. 360, of that edition, any one may read it and its accompanying moral. The *englyn* quoted needs many corrections; but the reader need not be troubled with these matters any further.

Like Mr. Baring-Gould's chapter, over a page of Mr. Jacobs's note deals with "parallels," by which the monopoly of the legend by Bedd Gelert is made impossible; but, unlike Mr. Baring-Gould, Mr. Jacobs has given evidence of his

acquaintance with the Welsh literature of the legend, as well as with its oral tradition. We should have been glad to have received some help in gauging its antiquity as a part of the traditions of Wales; but that is more the task of the Welsh folk-lorist, and so we must wait for a while again. Mr. Jacobs's strength has been devoted to the inquiry as to when the legend became connected with Llewelyn and Bedd Gelert.

"It may be desirable to point out why it is necessary to assume that the legend is a legend and not a fact. The saving of an infant's life by a dog, and the mistaken slaughter of the dog, are not such an improbable combination as to make it impossible that the same event occurred in many places. But what is impossible, in my opinion, is that such an event should have independently been used in different places as the typical instance of, and warning against, rash action. That the Gelert legend, before it was localised, was used as a moral apologue in Wales is shown by the fact that it occurs among the fables of Cattwg the Wise, which are all of that character. It was also utilised as a proverb. 'I repent as much as the man who slew his greyhound.' The fable indeed, from this point of view, seems greatly to have attracted the Welsh mind, perhaps as of especial value to the proverbially impetuous temperament." So far we follow Mr. Jacobs with frank approval.

Then he goes on to refer to Croker as pointing out "several places where the legend seems to have been localised in place-names"; these are "Gwâl y Vilast" ("Greyhound's Couch") and "Lech yr Ast" ("Dog's Stone"). We have every reason to believe that these names have nothing to do with the legend, as both names are in the feminine, while the legend always speaks of a male greyhound; they are rather traces of paganism. "In the Warwick Roll at the Herald's Office, after giving separate crests for England, Scotland, and Ireland, that for Wales is given as figured in the margin,[1] and blazoned 'on a coronet in a cradle or, a greyhound argent for Walys.'" Would not this crest strongly tend to prove its

[1] See page 261.

early connection with the British princes, otherwise it would not have been used as the Welsh national crest at that time? and this would make it all the more probable since the legend is at present connected with the most powerful of all the princes—Llewelyn, the great-grandfather of our last prince.

Having thus endeavoured to show that the legend not only has parallels in India, China, Persia, and Continental countries, and at Ap Brune, County Limerick, but was localised in other parts of Wales—Abergarwan (Iolo MSS. version) and Abergavenny (though we cannot find Mr. Baring-Gould's statement quoted by Mr. Jacobs)—long before it was connected with Bedd Gelert, he proceeds "to explain how and when this general legend of rash action was localised and specialised at Bedd Gelert."

Mr. Joseph Jacobs's Discovery.—Mr. Jacobs claims to have made a discovery which explains the advent of the legend to Bedd Gelert, and this we will now proceed to explain. We shall have to quote a good deal.

"There certainly was a local legend about a dog named Gelert at that place. E. Jones, in the first edition of his *Musical (and Poetical) Relicks of the Welsh Bards*, 1784, p. 40, gives the following *englyn* or epigram :—

"Claddwyd Cilhart celfydd—ymlyniad
Ym mlaenau Eifionydd ;
Parawd giniaw i'w gynydd
Parai'r dydd yr heliai'r hŷdd,

which he Englishises thus :—

"The remains of famed Cylart, so faithful and good,
The bounds of the cantred conceal ;
Whenever the doe or the stag he pursued,
His master was sure of a meal.[1]

No reference was made in the first edition to the Gelert legend, but in the second edition of 1794, p. 75, a note was added telling the legend." Then Mr. Jacobs quotes Jones's version of the Gelert legend, and adds that the Hon. W. R. Spencer must have got his account from that note. Then he

[1] See Elvet's *trans.* p. 24.

goes on to say that "The application of the general legend of 'the man who slew his greyhound' to the dog Cylart was due to the learning of E. Jones, author of the *Musical Relicks*. I am convinced of this, for by a lucky chance I am enabled to give the real legend about Cylart, which is thus given in Carlisle's *Topographical Dictionary of Wales*, s.v. 'Bedd Celert,' published in 1811, the date of publication of Mr. Spencer's *Poems*." "Its name, according to tradition, implies *The Grave of Celert*, a greyhound which belonged to Llewelyn, the last Prince of Wales, and a large Rock is still pointed out as the monument of this celebrated Dog, being on the spot where it was found dead, together with the stag which it had pursued from Carnarvon, which is thirteen miles distant."

Now Mr. Jacobs's theory is briefly this:—A poet hears the story of the dog of Llewelyn, the *last* prince, as quoted by Carlisle, and writes an *englyn* in honour of that hound; Jones finds the *englyn*, and in the second edition of his *Relicks* explains it by giving the well-known Gelert legend, which is connected with our last prince's grandfather, Llewelyn the Great, which note Spencer sees and uses. Mr. Jacobs thinks that the reason "why Jones connected the legend with Llewelyn" was the Prince's connection with Bedd Gelert, that the place was "named after the abbey, not after the cairn or rock."

The Discovery considered.—We will now hold these well-applied arguments before the light of local information, and see how far they are based on facts. In the first place we should like to point out that we have no trace whatever of Carlisle's story in the parish at present. But it is not at all impossible that such a story was related before the advent of the tale of Gelert to explain the name of the village. It is not the only place with which a story made up of similar elements is told. We remember hearing a story connected with a parish in South Wales, in which a favourite dog of the gentleman, who kept the finest pack of hounds in that part of the country, had chased a fox for nearly a whole day, covering five parishes in the chase, and leaving the other dogs

far behind; and when at the close of the day the fox fell down exhausted, the dog could only barely reach the spot where it had fallen, and then throw itself over the fox's mouth and smother it. The dog himself died almost immediately afterwards. So far it is parallel with Carlisle's story. But in our story the little mare of the whipper-in came in for a share of the glory, for she alone had kept her rider within sight of the chase to the last, except that her rider took compassion on her and ran the last mile on foot to the spot of "the kill," leaving her tied to a gate.

The "large Rock . . . pointed out as the monument of the Dog" is also gone, for the stone on the grave cannot possibly be referred to. The *englyn* doubtless referred to some such tale, for it has no reference to the Gelert legend, now so-called.

But was it Edward Jones, "Bardd y Brenhin," who imported the Gelert legend to the parish first of all? No, we are sure it was not. It was David Prichard, the first landlord of the Royal Goat Hotel, who came into the parish about the year 1793, and hailed from South Wales. He was a man of superior intelligence, and very fond of hearing and relating stories, so that his advent into this parish of skilled *raconteurs* was not a thing to be soon dropped out of memory. In fact, he soon became a centre of attraction. He farmed the land connected with the hotel. The tale of "The Man who Killed his Greyhound" was well known in South Wales, and he soon began to colour it to the village of his adoption. The story given by Carlisle, or the name of the village, supplied the name of the dog, and Llewelyn made a capital owner. We can now conjecture the rest.

Edward Jones was busily preparing his new edition of the *Relicks*, and would naturally spend at least a little time in this neighbourhood, where music and poetry of the most characteristic sort were stored in the memories of the old inhabitants, and where he had previously been supplied with so much. Every one would tell him of the "Hwntw" who had not long since settled among them, as no one could be of such great interest as he to Edward Jones. Hence the note added to the second edition of the *Relicks*. In 1784, when he was

bringing out his first edition, Mr. Prichard was not there; but he was there in good time for the second.

The other conclusion, that the Hon. Mr. Spencer got his account from E. Jones, is also incorrect. If the reader will take the trouble to refer to Jones's second edition of the *Relicks* (p. 75), or to Mr. Jacobs's *Celtic Fairy Tales* (p. 262), he will see the great difference between Jones's version and that of Spencer. No one would charge Spencer with taking from Jones, except some one who had no better idea of Spencer's movements at this time; for Jones did not supply nearly enough for Spencer's purpose. The truth is that both got it from the same complete source; one made a note of the story, and the other made a ballad of it. It may also be asked, if Spencer took from Jones, why did he wait from 1794 till 1800 before using his material?

These are the facts: Mr. Spencer was staying, in 1800, with his friend W. A. Madocks, Esq., at Dol y Melynllyn, near Dolgelley. It was in that same year that Mr. Madocks completed his first embankment, by which he reclaimed some nineteen hundred acres from Traeth Mawr. Whenever he had something particular to attend to in connection with this embankment he would come over to Tan yr Allt—of Shelley fame—near Tremadoc; and when it was completed Spencer accompanied him over, when both paid a memorable visit to Bedd Gelert.

There had been some talk of building a hotel in Bedd Gelert, and David Prichard was marked out as the man to conduct it. When discussing this project, Prichard told Spencer the story of Gelert, and it laid hold of his mind most powerfully. The result was *Beth Gelert, or the Grave of the Greyhound*, which he printed for private distribution. The copy that reached Thomas Jones, Esq., Bryntirion, soon roused that good man to the prospects of his property, and when Bingley passed through in 1801 the hotel was in process of erection, and was even then beginning to accommodate visitors. Ever since, Bedd Gelert has been like "a city built upon a hill."

Mr. Jacobs arrives at his conviction that Spencer got his

account from the *Relicks* by means of the fact that Jones's words, "the dog was a present to the prince from his father-in-law about the year 1205," are echoed in Spencer's note to his ballad. "The greyhound named Gelert was given him by his father-in-law, King John, in the year 1205." "Oral tradition," says Mr. Jacobs, "does not indulge in dates *Anno Domini*." We are not sure that this is without several exceptions, but if the statement were true, could not Mr. Prichard have mentioned the fact that Jones had used it after him, and that it could be seen in the second edition of the *Relicks*. Bingley gives the date from Jones, and we would just as easily believe that it was from Bingley that Spencer got his date. There does not seem to me any strong evidence that Spencer had seen the *Relicks* at all before the composition of his ballad, and Mr. Jacobs offers nothing stronger than what is found in the above quotations.

Local Faith in the Legend.—It may surprise Mr. Baring-Gould and Mr. Jacobs to know that the most merciless and business-like exposer of the origin of the connection of the tale with Bedd Gelert is a native of the village itself—a man bred in the very atmosphere of its legends. He penned his remarks as early as 1859, and published them in *Y Brython* for 1861. He writes with knowledge and authority. "We see that the myth is so universal that it cannot be attributed to a local event, much less to a period so late as that of Llewelyn ab Iorwerth. But lest there be some who may still firmly cling to it, we add that it does not traditionally belong to the parish. It had no place at all in the folk-lore of this part until it was brought to the parish by the late David Prichard, the Goat Hotel, who was a native of South Wales. It was he, along with William Prichard, the parish clerk, and Richard Edwards, of Pen y Bont Fach, who raised the stone that is exhibited to-day on the spot that was afterwards called 'the Dog's Grave.' We heard the latter two saying that they tried to raise up a large stone which lay on the northern side of the hillock, but that they failed; and they carried the present stone from another place in order to put it where it now is."

It was the same pen that exposed the Chatterton-like nature

of the "Old Manuscript" from which Glasynys pretended to quote, in order to give its localisation at Bedd Gelert the air of antiquity, so that Mr. Jacobs may still wish to modify the statement that "the legend is now firmly established at Bedd Gelert." Many of the inhabitants are still illiterate, and tradition and history are almost the same to them; but the majority of the people of Bedd Gelert have a delightful twinkle in their eye when they give their version of the story.

Welsh writers—E. Jones excepted—make no mention of the legend until Spencer's ballad has filled the country with its strains. The Rev. Nicholas Owen's book on *Carnarvonshire: a Sketch of its History, etc.*, which appeared in 1792, makes no mention of it; nor does William Williams refer to it in his interleaved and annotated copy of the same, which he procured in 1798, when he was at it busily preparing a book for the private use of his master, Lord Penrhyn. In 1802 he published the fruits of his labours in *Observations on the Snowdon Mountains*, which is one of the most interesting books of its size and kind. The author was an excellent historian and antiquary, and paid a good deal of attention to the traditions of the districts with which he was dealing; but he makes no reference to the legend in this book either, though he deals with the name Bedd Gelert. This proves that he did not meet David Prichard when collecting his materials, that the legend had not begun to spread, and that Spencer's ballad was not known to him.

(*J. Thomas, Liverpool, Photo.*)
Mr. Wm. Jones
("Bleddyn") when forty years old.

Having now "holpen the children of Lot" in robbing Bedd Gelert of the monopoly of this legend, what have we got to say in our own defence? Truth is its own defence, and it is

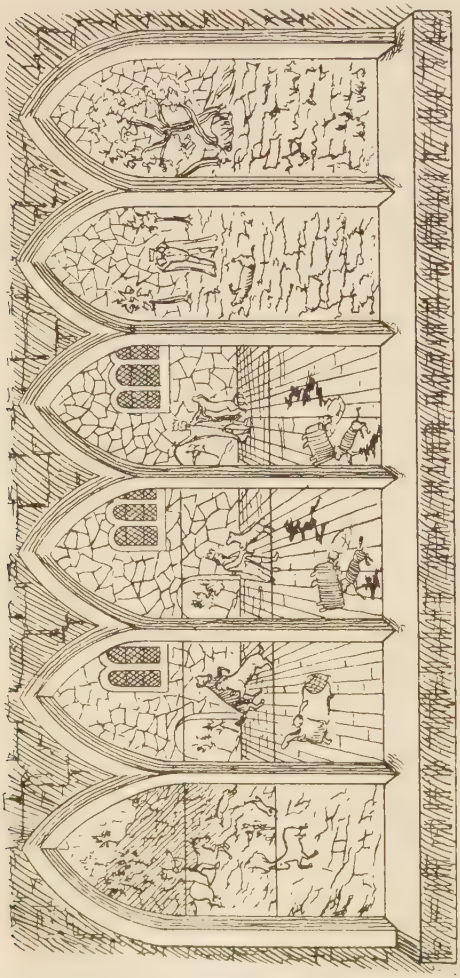
better for Bedd Gelert that all its attractions should be above board. Besides, why should the legend be less attractive than if it were history? and why should the lateness of its localisation give any disadvantage to its application at Bedd Gelert? It can answer the same purpose as such parables as Dives and Lazarus; and has not its localisation at Bedd Gelert been the means of giving to the world one of the most beautiful and pathetic versions in its whole history? We can scarcely conceive of any one failing to feel an interest in the grave simply because it is only a recent construction. In this grave we find evidence of the vividness with which the Welsh mind takes in the pith of a story; here is his lasting mark of admiration for such bravery and faithfulness as that of Gelert; here the shadows of the overhanging trees bespeak the grief of the rash man when it is too late to mend matters, and when he would give his all if it were not so. Shed your tears here for the world's unjust reward for faithfulness, for here is an abiding monument to the victims of "well done and ill paid."

It seems that a very excellent dog of the name of Gelert has been buried in the grave, and the comely spinsters who owned the dog spoke of its virtues as many and wonderful. Each of them would have found an apt expression for their mournful feelings in these lines:—

A pious monument I'll rear
In memory of the brave;
And passers-by will drop a tear
On faithful Gelert's grave.

The Legend in Art.—We do not know how far the legend has attracted the artist; but we have one instance in which art is made to tell the tale. One exceedingly wet Sunday, when two gentlemen were closely imprisoned in the Saracen's Head by the stormy weather without, the "Visitors' Book" found its way into the hands of one of them. The friends at the hotel noticed that both were using pen and ink for some hours, and that they seemed in constant anxiety lest they should rouse the suspicion of the landlady and the waiters. They, on the other hand, simply thought their guests were

busily engaged with private correspondence, and so gave them every facility with their work by entering the room as infrequently as they could. They were the only two strangers on that Sunday in the whole house.



The Gelert Legend in Art.
(Copied from the original by E. A. J.)

On the Monday morning they left, and some time during that day Mrs. Williams's attention was called to the accompanying sketch, under which was written the following explanation.

"The Death of Gelert

"Above is the sketch of an ancient stained-glass window found in the old priory of Bedd Gelert previous to its demolition, and still kept in the house of a friend of the writer—a Mr. Jones. A student of art will be enraptured with the gem. He will

notice at once that all the windows are not of the same size. He will see that No. 2 is not so large as No. 1 or 3. For in No. 2 the king does not figure, and a king has always to have a bigger window than any one else to—to—well, to show he *is* a king!

"Then he will notice that no detail is wanting; thus, the king always wears his crown. This also shows he is a king. Again the stag in No. 1 is in the foreground. That shows the unlearned that in a chase the stag would naturally be in front. Again, one notices that the dog in front of the king (it *is* a dog) is going! why, it is going like anything! No. 4 has a small window, although the king figures there. But then the king made a great mistake in killing his dog, and must have *looked* small, and so the artist thought it would be best to miss that part over, or at least to say very little about it. But it is not till No. 5 is reached that the student of art (I speak of the true student who has gone into the thing, and not simply glanced over it) sees before him the inspiration of a real old master. Oh, the anguish! Oh, the sorrow of the king! "Boohoo, where shall I get another, boohoo!" Truly here is sympathy, and were it not that scalding tears dimmed his eyes, the student would almost see the smile of irony in the dog's countenance. In No. 6 there is a distinct falling off. Evidently the master drew greatly from his own imagination, or, as some believe, procured another—some inferior hand—to finish the design. But taking it all in all, the piece is one of the finest of its kind; and the world of art in particular, and the world at large, have to thank Mr. Jones for having preserved so fine a work from ruin and oblivion."

L. T. S.

SARACEN'S HEAD, *9th October* 1886.

We make no comment, but simply reproduce what we found. Perhaps we ought, however, to mention that L. T. S. has never since been discovered; and it may be he shuns the scene of his interesting visit from the considerations of true friendship. What if he were asked for Mr. Jones's address? He could not refuse it, and the result would be that the home of

retiring Mr. Jones would be turned into a rendezvous of the curious. The tenderness of L. T. S.'s conscience must not be overlooked; for though he had the good excuse of indulging in fine art in order to beguile away a rainy Sabbath, he has handed down his sketch, and his letter-press, to posterity under the date of the previous Saturday. He may still be labouring under the weight of his guilt in advertising the invaluable services of Mr. Jones in "preserving so fine a work from ruin and oblivion."

CHAPTER VI

VILLAGE FOLK-LORE

Species of Ghosts.—We have no intention of exhausting here the subject of this chapter's heading; it will suffice to give a few specimens of what the good old people believed and repeated. It was a common practice for families to gather round large peat fires on long dark winter nights in the dim light of a rush candle, relating tales and ghost stories in turns, and for the best. The darker and stormier the night the better, for a dark night lent vividness to the descriptions, and stormy elements made the creeping stories more real and awe-inspiring. The stories were mostly of ghosts and their mischievous tricks. Ghosts were of three kinds: (1) spirits of the dead; (2) spirits of the living; and (3) goblins or demons, to which may be added the witches.

Among the first kind of ghosts were those of men murdered for their money, from jealousy, or for revenge. The old people believed that the ghost of a murdered man walked about until he could find some one brave enough to speak to him, so that he might reveal his secrets, and that afterwards he would vanish. There were formerly but few old mansions without their haunting ghosts and their tales of murdered heirs, and there was scarcely a road passing through woods

or narrow places which had not been the scene of crime. In these places the ghosts would appear. To this class also belonged the ghosts of people who had died suddenly without making their wills, and who walked about as a protest against the misappropriation of their possessions. The ghosts of mean old misers who had hidden their money in the earth or in the crack of a wall were also thought to be troublesome. There is a saying that "a miser cannot rest in his grave while his gold is weighing on his bones." These ghosts were not difficult to be got rid of, since it only needed a man with plenty of nerve and faith to speak to them; and when their secrets were revealed they had no further reason for appearing.

The belief in the second class of ghosts was probably due to the notion of the old people that men's spirits left them while they slept, and wandered to the places where their thoughts had been while awake. While the master was having his nap after dinner, the men-servant would see him one minute approaching them in the field, and the next minute gone; and the maid in the kitchen would see her mistress passing quite close to her, but on running upstairs would find her sleeping comfortably. These were harmless enough, for the worst thing they did was to brush up the slow-going servants, and give restless people the nightmare.

The third class differed greatly from the previous two, because these could be "raised" and "sent forth" by the witches and wizards for the purpose of worrying and annoying people; so that they were more haughty and unmanageable. These were not always satisfied with frightening and annoying people, but would attack them and drag them through brush-wood and trees up into the mountains, leaving them there to grope about until daybreak.

Raising and laying Ghosts.—Raising ghosts of the third kind was attributed to witches; for though men could raise them even better than the witches could, they never did so to annoy their neighbours, but rather used their power in putting down those which had been raised by the witches. Sometimes the men would use this power for their own and their neighbours' diversion. We have heard the story told of

a well-known doctor who used to sit down smoking his pipe under a tree in front of his house after returning from one of his journeys of mercy, and calling up some goblin in the shape of a hare or a fox, and letting loose a pack of "Hell Hounds" to hunt it to his own intense delight, as well as that of those that might have stood by.

But the witches raised them to curse their neighbours, to bring disease or complaint on their cattle, and to disturb their house. Some of the old hags would transform themselves into the shape of various creatures, and would rush out in front of people even during the day, to their great discomfort. Though the witches could lay ghosts as well as raise them if a man, his family, or his cattle had been bewitched, a woman was never sent for to put down the evil one. There were men known as "skilled men," and it was they who invariably undertook that perilous task. One reason for this was that the one who laid the ghost must possess a stronger will than the person who raised it, otherwise he would be in danger of having the ghost turn upon him and kill him. Tradition says that this did not infrequently happen, and that the spirit which was not put down demanded the soul of the man who failed, in order to hand it over immediately to his chief in demon-land.

It is said that several things were necessary besides a full knowledge of the mystery and learning of the art in order to lay ghosts successfully, and one thing was practical acquaintance with different goblins, because these, like human beings, have their classes and grades, and each one had to do the work allotted him according to his grade. In order to attain this knowledge skilled men had often to raise these spirits and send them forth to engage in some mischief or other, in order to have an opportunity of becoming acquainted with them and of knowing their grades, since ignorance of a goblin's grade was fatal.

A Perilous Struggle.—One skilled man thus related his perilous experience in laying a ghost on one occasion when he had mistaken the grade of the troubler. "You have heard speak of the ghost of Erw," said he; "it was an awful

ghost, one of the worst that I have ever heard of. He became so exceedingly troublesome that the family had to give up the house, which was closed for some years in the hope that the ghost would go away. But on seeing that this did not avail, and that instead of becoming better the ghost became much worse, the man came to me to ask my advice. I at once consulted the oracles, and after satisfying myself with regard to the ghost and his strength, I promised to go and put him down.

"One evening—I shall never forget it—I went thither, and entered the house; I then made the mystical circle on the floor with salt, and drew the image of the cross in its centre. Then I entered the circle myself and stood between the arms of the cross in the customary way, reading the usual charm passage. Almost instantly the door is flung back, and some hideous creature, not unlike a huge tiger, enters, gnashing its terrible teeth at me. It then turned around the circle, as much as to say, 'I have got thee now.' I immediately perceived that I had mistaken its grade, and that I had used too low a summons. But I stood like steel before him, showing not the slightest bit of fear, and ordered him to withdraw in the name of the cross on which I stood, or else that I would curse him with endless torture. He stood unmoved, and there we remained for a long time staring at one another, until at last I could see him gradually withdrawing. I then instantly changed one word in the charm passage, and he came back, licking the floor like a dog before his master. I pronounced his sentence and sacrificed him to the bottom of Llyn Du; and while there is water in that lake he will never come forth to trouble any one again. That was the last spirit with which I had to do, or will have to do. If I had betrayed the least bit of fear, or if I had taken my eye off for the quarter of a second, I would have been done for."

David Prichard's Ghost.—About the end of the last century Mr. David Prichard moved into the village to live. He was an enterprising man and full of energy. He took the Goat Hotel when it was erected, together with the land attached to it. His intelligence and knowledge of agriculture

gave him the advantage over his neighbours. The land rented with the hotel had only some two or three decent fields belonging to it, but he cleared away the stones and dried the marshy swamps, so that in a few years he had made his poor holding an excellent farm, and he received a silver cup as an acknowledgement of his industry from the owners of the surrounding land. He also enlarged the hotel, and made it in every way attractive. This brought forth its fruits in due season, and David Prichard became "very well off." He was very fond of money, and he with his farm, and his wife with the hotel, carried on a sort of contest as to who should make the largest proportionate profit. He was taken suddenly ill, and died without making his will. Soon after his interment something began to disturb the peace of the house during the night. Steps were heard in the empty chambers and on the stairs; at other times the fire-irons could be heard moving in the bar, and a noise as of some one poking the fire. This disturbance lasted for some time, but after vigils and searchings nothing could be seen. After a while it was whispered that some of the servants had seen their old master in his ordinary clothes—his corduroy knickerbockers and homespun—coming out of the bar; others said that they had seen him about the stables. As time went on the spirit became bolder, and strutted every night before people on the roads and by-paths; he was even seen walking about the fields with his hands in his trouser-pockets, after the manner of Mr. Prichard himself. The apparition had become so frequent, and the fear of it had spread so much, that none but the most fearless and brave would go out at night. There was an old labourer working on the farm who feared nothing, and who was very fond of his old master. But, for some reason or other, the ghost did not appear to him, though he loitered about many a night in the hope of seeing it. One very dark night, however, on leaving the cow-house after giving the cattle their supper, he saw old Mr. Prichard standing before him. He approached him, but the ghost retreated, and walked in the direction of the village. He followed it up to the churchyard, then the ghost crossed

the stile and walked through the churchyard to the porch of the church; he again followed, and saw him leaning against the door. "Well, master," said he, "what has induced you to wander about during the night in this fashion?" "Hwlyn," replied he, "I'm glad to see thee, because my bones could not rest in the grave. Go and tell Alice to morrow to raise up the hearthstone of the bar-room, and she will find there a hundred guineas, two of which she must give thee." The ghost then immediately vanished. On the morrow "Hwlyn" did as he was told, and the money was found as described. "Hwlyn" got his two guineas, and the ghost has never disturbed any one since.

The Shot Hare.—Beti Ifan was one of the witches of Bedd Gelert. Her fear had fallen upon nearly all the inhabitants, so that she was refused nothing by any one, for she had the reputation of being able to handle ghosts, and to curse people and their possessions. She therefore lived in comfort and ease, doing nothing except keeping her house moderately clean, and leaning on the lower half of her front door knitting and watching passers-by. But there was one man in the village, a cobbler and a skilled poacher, who feared neither Beti Ifan nor any other old hag of the kind. His great hobby was to tease and annoy the old woman by showing her a hare or a wild duck, and asking her if she would like to get it. When she replied she would, he used to hand it almost within her reach and then pull it back, and walk away. She could not do him much harm, as he had a birth mark above his breast; but she contrived a way by which she could have her revenge on him. She used to transform herself into a wild duck or hare, and continually appear before him on the meadows and among the trees whenever he went out poaching, but took good care to keep outside the reach of the gun. He, being a good shot, and finding himself missing so frequently, began to suspect something to be amiss. He knew of a doctor who was a "skilled man" living not far away, so he went to consult him. The doctor told him, "Next time you go out take with you a small branch of mountain ash, and a bit of vervain and place it under the

stock of the gun." Then giving him a piece of paper with some writing on, he said, "When you see the hare, or any other creature of which you have some doubt, read this backward, and if it is old Beti you will see her in her own form, though she retain her assumed form; shoot at her legs, but mind you do not shoot her anywhere else."

The next day, as he was working his way through a grove near Beti's house, he could see a large hare hopping in front of him. He drew out his paper and read as he was instructed; he then fired at her legs, and the hare ran towards Beti's cottage. He ran after it, and was just in time to see the hare

(*Drawing by S. M. Jones.*)

The Witch turned Hare (see p. 356).

jumping over the lower half of the house door. Going up to the cottage he could hear the old woman groaning; when he went in she was sitting by the fire with blood streaming from her legs. He was never again troubled with the hare-like appearances of old Beti'r Fedw.

Gwrach y Rhibin.—This goblin appeared in the form of a girl of an immense size, and of an extremely hideous appearance. She had bright red hair, as coarse as a horse's tail, falling down in rough ringlets over her bony shoulders. Her two cheek-bones projected like two ridges, and her curved nose reached almost to her pointed chin. Her eyes flashed

red fire from their deep sockets, and when she opened her mouth to give forth her awful howl or shout she showed two or three teeth like the spikes of a harrow, lying the one across the other. This she-goblin usually made her appearance on cross-roads or in sharp turnings in the road or path. She came to sight suddenly, just as a bird alights on one's path, and stood in front of the pedestrian with her long bony arms uplifted, and shouting in a cold, shrill voice, "Woe is me! woe is me!" until one felt his head splitting, his heart and limbs giving way, and his blood running cold in his veins. Her appearance invariably foretold some misfortune, and very often the death of the one to whom she appeared; or it might be the death of some near and dear relative. The awful fright which she gave many caused their death or drove them insane, so that it was a common saying when any one had lost his reason that the old "gwrach" (hag) had bewitched him.

The Brown Hobgoblin.—This was one of the day-goblins, and generally appeared to lonely wayfarers when crossing from one district to another over mountain tracks. He would appear in the form of a rustic, clad in homespun and corduroy, wearing nothing on his head, and carrying a long stick like that of a shepherd. He invariably walked in front of the traveller, with his back towards him, but not on the ordinary path. He would keep alongside of the path, and would thus gradually draw his follower out of the way. After he had drawn the wayfarer far enough from the path, he would suddenly disappear behind some wall or heap, leaving his dupe in great perplexity and utter ignorance of his whereabouts.

This goblin would sometimes descend from the mountains into the glens and valleys, and would strut along the walls in the fields, and along the roadside; he would now and again pop his head over the hedges to look into the roads. Thus parents frequently warned their children not to loiter on their errands for fear that "Bwbach Llwyd" would see them.

The Grey Sprite.—This also was one of the apparitions of the day-time, and, like the brown goblin, was never known to

speak. He was a noiseless creature, dwelling in the fog and mist, and when the mist cleared he would vanish too, as noiselessly and suddenly as he appeared. He generally wore green clothes, of the same colour as the grass of the field, having knickerbockers and green hose, and on his head a large cap of the same colour. His beard was long and white, which, together with his alpenstock, gave him a rather patriarchal appearance. He always faced the man to whom he appeared, and stood at no great distance from him. When some one tried to approach him, he moved backward, so that no one could get nearer to him than the distance at which he stood when he first appeared. He was seldom seen except on the slopes above the roads and the paths, and so could be seen between one and the light beyond. As far as we have been able to find out, he was never known to do any one harm, nor to lead any one out of the proper path, as the Brown Goblin did; yet the children who had a tendency to wander were threatened in his name. The people who disliked the appearance of the "Bodach Glâs" were the shepherds, for they firmly maintained that they always lost lambs in the places where they had seen him, and that he stole them for the fairies. To his credit be it said, he was never caught in the act of committing this felony.

Lantern Jack.—This is one of the apparitions of the night, and one of the most mischievous and tricky of the ghostly family. What form or colour he has we know not, as no one has ever clearly seen him; his lantern has been seen, and he has been heard splitting his sides with laughter at his own tricks, and the perplexity of those whom he might have led astray; and people say that his laugh was not unlike the loud sudden neighing of a horse. His light was seen on dark nights like a lighted lantern on the sheep-paths on the hillsides. If he happened to be far off, no one was deceived, as his ungainly movements betrayed him as "Lantern Jack in search of his sheep," and as the saying goes

> An *ignis fatuus*
> Deceives not many of us.

The time when he generally succeeded with his mischief

was when he found some one all alone travelling a path on open fields. He would begin by appearing as a small speck of fire, of a clear blue flame, which he moved before the wayfarer along the middle of the path until his attention had been secured; then the flame would gradually grow until its brightness would completely blind him, after which the traveller was entirely at Jack's mercy, and he would lead him where he pleased. Stories are related of men who have been led miles out of their way in this manner, especially young men going to see their sweethearts on dark winter nights.

The Water Sprite.—This goblin used to appear in several forms, and for that reason was known by several names, according to the manner in which he made his appearance. He would sometimes appear as a wretched old man, with his bald head and long, thin, white beard. It was in this form he used to appear in flooded streams and rivers, furiously stemming the wildest torrents, and again leaping down the falls into the rumbling pools below. He would then rise up in the middle of the splashing current, and stretch his long fleshless arms, looking fierce and wild, and would once more hurl himself on the sweeping waters and float down the stream. When he appeared in this manner he was called "the Water Horse;" and it was useless trying to fish that day in the pools where he had been playing antics, for the fish were too much frightened even to search for food. It was also very unsafe for the fishermen to approach the river when he appeared in that wild and fierce mood, because, if he only got hold of their lines, he would pull tackle and fisherman into the waters.

Sabbath Fishing punished.—The Water Sprite would sometimes appear as a large fish, and would frequently play serious jokes on some fishermen. There is a story told of a certain Guto Owen, from Bedd Gelert, who was a shoemaker by trade, and a consummate hand at harpooning salmon. He never made any difference between days of the week—all he wanted was to see a good fish in some pool or under some stone, and he was off immediately for his spear. He had been frequently warned of the sprite, but he had seen him so frequently sporting in the boiling pools of the Pass that his

familiarity had bred contempt for the water demon. One Sabbath morning, after a little fall of rain, he went down along the edge of the river, spear in hand, as far as "Maen Mawr" (the Large Stone). He jumped on top of this stone, and, behold! a fine large fish slowly working its way up to the pool above. As it was passing the end of the stone Guto raised his spear and struck it right into the fish. But, alas! what a terrible shout! The handle of the spear is in pieces, and the harpooner himself is gone, head foremost, into the pool! He was glad to have escaped with his life, and never did he care to hear of Sunday fishing after that.

The Candle of the Dead.—Of all apparitions of former times, not one caused such fear and terror in the minds of the common people as this Candle of the Dead; it was believed to be always a prediction of the death of whoever was unfortunate enough to see it, or else some very near relative. Belief in this apparition is not yet a thing of the past, for we have heard with our own ears people asserting in real earnest that they themselves had seen them, and that some one of their acquaintance or kin had invariably died after the vision. The light of the candle was different from that of Lantern Jack; it was a clear white flame, and when far off was as large as the flame of an ordinary lamp, but diminished as it drew nearer, until it became the size of the flame of a common candle. It drew near enough to enable one to see whether it was a man or a woman who carried it, so that one could say whether it was a man or a woman who would die next. People say that there was some charm in the light of this candle, so that they could not resist following it until it was extinguished; in this manner many lost their way, and became so bewildered that they could not find their way home until next morning. It did not always appear in the same manner, for some say that it first appeared near the house where the death was to take place, and that it then went by the footpath or road along which the funeral was to go, until it reached the churchyard, and that it went out on the place where the corpse was to be laid. Others have seen it starting from the churchyard and going towards the house where death was to enter.

The Vision of Farmer Cawellyn.—The following story does not belong to the village, nor indeed to the parish, but it serves as a capital illustration of many a similar story that has gone the round of the parish, but is now forgotten.

The farmer of Cawellyn was returning home one evening from Carnarvon market, and when not far from Glangwna he could see a gentleman's carriage going on in front of him. The carriage was lit up, and he could clearly see the coachman sitting in his seat, and hear the sound of the hoofs of two horses going at a trotting pace. He gave his horse the spurs, in order to catch up the carriage and have a chat with the coachman, but he could not for the life of him get near it. He then rode on more slowly, in order to give his horse more time to climb up the hills on the road near Waenfawr; and when he came to a flat road he spurred his horse on again, but without getting any nearer the carriage. When they drew near to Bettws Hotel, the carriage hurried on, and he heard the horse stopping in front of the house, and saw the light going into it. He drove on rapidly in order to see who it was, but by the time he got to the hotel there was nothing to be seen, and all the family were in bed. He was afraid to go farther that night, so he knocked and asked for lodgings over night, which he immediately got.

The next morning he asked if there was any one ill in the house, and when he had been assured that there was no one, he went over the story of what he had seen the previous evening. They concluded that he had seen a Candle of the Dead, and that some one belonging to one of the two families would be sure to die soon. In less than a week a carriage and pair, from the direction of Carnarvon, drove up to the hotel, and the footman went in and asked if a gentleman might rest there until a doctor could be fetched to him. When the request was granted, an elderly gentleman was taken out of the carriage; he seemed to have had a heavy fainting fit on the way, and he welcomed the bed with a feeling of relief. The goodman of the hotel drove off to Carnarvon for a doctor, as fast as his horse could take him, and the doctor returned with him at full speed. When he

saw the patient, he said that he could not be removed that day, but that he might be fit to be removed the next day. The old gentleman, however, grew worse, and at the same hour and the same minute as the farmer of Cawellyn had heard the carriage stopping before the hotel, he passed away.

Ghostly Funerals. — Ghostly funerals were also the messengers of death, and filled the common people with as much fear as the Candles, but they were not so frequently seen. They only appeared before the death of some well-known or distinguished person in the district, or some one noted for his wickedness and ungodliness. The funeral was not so often seen as heard, invariably coming from the house where death was to take place. The crowd was made up of the spirits of those who would be attending the funeral, each spirit taking up the exact position which its owner would take on the day of burial. If horses and traps were to be in the procession, they could be distinctly heard. When one happened to meet one of these ghostly processions, the best thing was to silently wait by the road-side until the whole concourse had passed by, for fear they might trample him under foot, or take him on to the church-yard—an ordeal that generally ended in insanity.

Hell Hounds.—Hell Hounds were to be seen during the day and to be heard during the night, hunting at full cry. They were said to be little dogs with red eyes and ears, and having their mouths full of a blood-red foam. When on the hunt, they followed one another in a string, like sheep on a footpath, and the sound of their barking seemed as if it were in the air above. On stormy nights they might be heard howling bitterly in almost every creak of the rock; and if one of them happened to lose the others, he would run up and down the banks of the river next to him, howling incessantly until he came across the pack again. Their work was supposed to be hunting the spirits of wicked people, and driving them to the halls of the lower regions. They portended nothing evil, as other ghosts did, nor did they annoy men in any way except by their unearthly cries.

Such are some of the elements that filled in the stories that were repeated with such zest, generation after generation, in this little village and parish of Bedd Gelert.

CHAPTER VII

THE PRIORY

When founded.—In a long article printed in the second volume of the first series of the ARCHÆOLOGIA CAMBRENSIS, H. Longueville Jones, M.A., has put forth a large number of very interesting facts relating to this ancient institution. It is the fruit of much reading and careful investigation, so that we cannot do better than make extensive use of it. We have already anticipated some of the points which must be added to his account, and in some things we shall have to vary from him.

As he says, "The absence of materials for a connected history of this religious house is a characteristic of its existence, in which it has shared the fate of so many other conventual establishments. It is, indeed, by no means improbable that not many materials existed; or, at all events, that no very striking historical matters connected with it have been left on record. From its very nature, and still more from its position, it was calculated to be an abode of 'that peace which the world cannot give,' and to remain so until that peace, and that good, which existed here, were allowed by Providence to disappear, under the destroying hand of a ruthless tyrant and his rapacious ministers. It is no reproach to the Priory that we know little about it. It was not founded for purposes of worldly ostentation, it was not intended to be the means of advertising the munificence of the several benefactors; it was placed here for the good of men's souls, for the benefit of future generations of Christians; and, doubtless, it fulfilled that purpose of holy charity as far as the inherent weakness of human institutions would allow."

P. B. Williams says that "It was first erected, most probably, by some benevolent and charitably disposed individual, as inns were scarce in those days, as an Hospitium, or place of hospitality, . . . and as colleges and places of education were, in those turbulent times, built in such retired situations, for security from the incursions of enemies and the ravages of pirates and sea rovers, Bedd Gelert may have had its small chapel and school-house adjoining the Hospitium." This idea of seclusion can only be taken in a special sense. In one sense it was not at all secluded. It was "on the high road of communication, even in the remotest times of civilisation, from the ancient Roman city of Segontium towards Mediolanum, and so into the Salopian plains around Uriconium." In another sense it was. It was at the base of high mountains, and the junction of comparatively narrow valleys. There was nothing in the district to attract batches of robbers or annoying vagrants. Travellers and pilgrims peacefully enjoyed the kind attention of the willing monks, and passed on their way refreshed.

We are told that Christianity had taken root in Roman Britain by the end of the third century. But it is almost certain that North Wales was still Druid until after the Anglo-Saxon invasion in A.D. 449, when the people were driven back by the invaders into North and South Wales. How soon the new teaching penetrated into the secluded district, of which Bedd Gelert is the centre, it is impossible to know. Brynach Wyddel "was the first king of those countries who received the Christian Faith. He was converted and baptized by St. Rhidian of Gower and Rheged, and made the first Christian Churches in North Wales, inculcating in them faith and baptism among the Cambro-Britons and Irish of his kingdom. He lived in the time of the Emperor Maximus."[1] How much he did for Bedd Gelert we do not know. We may well imagine that such a convenient Hospitium would not be without its frequent guests, passing along the great Irish road, by way of Holyhead, to England and from South and West Wales to North Wales and Ireland; and many of the

[1] *Iolo MSS.* p. 474.

guests would be pious men on missionary tours. The great Roman station of Segontium, with its Christian military converts, was only thirteen miles away, so that it is probable that this place had come under the influence of Christianity long before the time that we can trace its history wider afield in North Wales.

It is, however, not an uneasy task to fix the approximate date of the adoption of Bedd Gelert as a monastic settlement. Prof. Hugh Williams, M.A., of Bala, in his excellent pamphlet on the early *Christian Church in Wales*, points out that there are four clearly marked stages in the development of monasticism in Wales. The first and second of these, if we understand him rightly, were practically, if not entirely, confined to South Wales. Therefore we naturally conclude that however widely Christianity had been diffused up to a certain period in North Wales, it had not taken the form of monasticism. Towards the middle of the sixth century a new order of monks sprang up, which was as that of the Eremites or Anchorites. These were monks who, "through a new zeal for a stricter life, took to seeking desert places in the wilderness," or some places of great seclusion among the hills.

As this movement "seems to have been common to Gaul, Wales, and Ireland about the end of the sixth century," and as Bedd Gelert must have impressed the most religious of the people as a place of profound seclusion, we can easily understand how it would be among the first places to be occupied by the Anchorites. This conjecture becomes still more plausible, when we remember that these hermits at once began to withdraw to the islands, as the most secluded places on which to build their monasteries, that Bardsey was very early occupied by the hermit-monks called Cele De, and that Bishop Anian makes Bedd Gelert of equal antiquity with Bardsey. The meagreness of the materials connected with it—even after the researches of Dugdale and Tanner—and the absence of any deeds or records relating to it in the Bangor Cathedral Library, make it very difficult to speak with certainty; but we strongly believe that we are not far from the mark when we

put the date of the establishment of Bedd Gelert Priory in the middle, or during the latter half, of the sixth century.

The following fact seems to confirm our conclusions. During the renovations that were made on the church buildings in the years 1828-30, while pulling down a good deal of the walls of the old priory church, a stone bearing a well-wrought inscription was found in the southern wall. John Jones, Glan Gwynant, who happened to be the parish overseer at the time, thought it might be of some value and worth preserving, and so took it home, and kept it with care. One day a gentleman who took great interest in antiquities came by, and was shown the stone. He read the inscription, and found that it recorded the instituting of the Priory in the seventh century. He, unfortunately, persuaded Mr. Jones to let him have the stone, and gave him a sovereign for preserving it from destruction. We wish we could find some means of tracing that gentleman's descendants, but we are grateful for the interpretation of the inscription which has been handed down to us. We must add this much, however; there is every reason to believe that it was only an inscription made, perhaps some hundreds of years ago, on the evidence of tradition.

Its Mediæval History.—It seems that the different monastic orders, which were established in this country, became greatly degenerated during the dark and turbulent period from the end of the seventh to the beginning of the eleventh century. Order and discipline were neglected, the members, with but very few exceptions, were exceedingly ignorant, and had become proverbially worldly and ungodly. Christendom had become exceedingly un-Christian at almost every point. But about the middle of the eleventh century, just as the dawn of civilisation was about to break on Europe, a spirit of religious reform began to manifest itself, "of which the great monastic house of Clugny, in Burgundy, was the chief source and centre." This movement of reform soon spread, and began a new period in the history of monasteries. Public opinion soon found expression for its gratitude for the change, and by the beginning of the next century rich men and princes were heaping their riches

upon the monasteries in the form of endowments. Monks became famous for their learning too, and so the monasteries became the repertories of memorials and records of the various countries.

Among other institutions that benefited from the new movement, St. Mary's Priory, in North Wales, derived a great deal of real good. Owen Gwynedd, that brave, noble, brilliant, and large-hearted prince, began to take an interest in it; he encouraged the monks to study, associated with the Prior, and endowed the institution with extensive property. The natural result of this was that the Prior began to enlarge his tent, and we find him taking up his abode, among other places, at Llanidan, where Prince Owen also had a residence. There is a document still extant which proves beyond any dispute that the townships of Tre'r Beirdd and Berw, in Anglesey, were appropriated (by a grant of Owen Gwynedd) to the monastery of Bedd Gelert. As we shall have cause to refer to it again, we may as well quote it here.

Charter of Tre'r Beirdd.[1]—"Be it known to all by these presents, that I, Iorwerth ap Dafydd ap Garw, a free tenant of the Prior of Bedd Gelert, in the township of Tref Beirdd, comot of Menai, and county of Anglesey, have given, granted, sold, and quietly surrendered for ever to Cynrig ap Meredydd Ddu, and Ithel, his son, free tenants, or their assignees, all the lands in the township of Berw, and in the hamlet of Tref Beirdd, with all their appurtenances, by permission of Mr. Cynhelin, Prior of Bedd Gelert; and I have given, granted, and quietly surrendered for ever to the aforesaid Cynrig ap Meredydd Ddu, and Ithel, their heirs, or assignees, all my land at Glas Ynys, in the aforesaid township of Trefeyrd (Tref Beirdd), with all their appurtenances and easements which are determined on one side by Ynys y Meirch, opposite to Trefarthen, and on the other side by Gwaur Walchmai, facing Tref-beyrdd; to have and to hold the said lands of me and my aforesaid heirs, Cynrig and Ithel, their heirs and assignees, having free and peaceable possession thereof by hereditary right in perpetuity, with power to give, sell, and

[1] Taken from *Arch. Cambr.* vol. iii. p. 165 (first series).

assign them whensoever and to whomsoever they please. And I, the aforesaid Iorwerth, or my heirs, will warrant that surrender, grant, and peaceable claim against all people, and will defend the same at our own private cost. In testimony of which I have affixed my seal to this present deed, the following persons being witness and sureties, viz. Evan ap Gwilym ap Rathro, Einion ap Cynwrig ap Madyn, Madoc ap Iorwerth ap Bleddyn, Iorwerth ap Howel ap Tegeryn Ddu, with many others. Given at Llanidan, in the monastery there, on Friday, by the authority of the See of the Holy Father, in the 34th year of the reign of Edward III., King of England, in the year of our Lord 1360."

This charter does not explain how the Prior came into the right of exercising such dominion in the above district—another document will explain that—but it shows (1) that the Prior had a residence at Llanidan, (2) that it was called a monastery. "Perhaps his monastery," says the learned author of *Mona Antiqua*, "was situated in that place where the ruins (now called Murddyn y Prior) near Blochdy, on the south side of this township, are to be seen." Thus we gather that the Prior wielded a great influence over an extensive part of Owen Gwynedd's dominion, and we may give him credit of having wielded it for noble ends.

Its Destruction.—In the year 1194 Llewelyn the Great, also called Llewelyn ap Iorwerth, succeeded to the princedom of Gwynedd and part of South Wales. His period is one long chapter of wars, in which his own personal courage and tact were shown to the best advantage. Whatever his own disposition may have been, the turbulent times kept him almost constantly on the battlefield. But this did not prevent him from attending to his spiritual affairs, and we find that he followed the example of the noble Owen, as his example, in turn, was followed by his grandson, Llewelyn, the last prince, and endowed the Priory.

In the year 1283 or 1284, not long after our last Prince was treacherously slain, a great calamity befel the Priory. It was in the busy "time of hospitality," when all were earnestly engaged with the extra duties of the season, that a great fire

enveloped the whole building in flames and reduced it all to ashes. This was a terrible blow to the Prior, who found that all the charters by which he held the land that brought in the revenues which maintained the institution were now in charcoal. What could he do? His princely benefactors were no more, and the hopes of all aspiring successors were cut off. Edward I. was ruling his new dominion with a strong hand, and an appeal to him for his kind interference seemed worse than useless.

The Prior consulted Anian, Bishop of Bangor, who advised him to write to the King, placing before him the facts of the case. The real facts relating to the manner in which the Priory took fire were probably not mentioned in the letter which Prior Madoc wrote to the King; those were sent to another quarter, as we shall presently point out. It was enough for him to explain to Edward the extent of the property involved, and the sources from which the various portions of it had come. Anian himself also wrote to the King, throwing the weight of his testimony on the side of the anxious Prior. The King complied with the wishes of the Bishop, and granted what the Prior had appealed for. But he did more than that; he also rebuilt the Priory at his own expense.

Both Dugdale and Rymer quote the King's charter, as well as a letter issued by Anian. Whether the letter which they quote is the same as the one sent by him to the King, it is difficult to say. In his letter the Bishop speaks of the house as being "fully restored by the pious, Catholic, and liberal King," though his letter bears a date earlier by thirty-eight days than Edward's charter, which contains a reference to the "letters patent" of the "venerable father, Anian, Bishop of Bangor." The explanation is, probably, that Edward ordered the restoration immediately, and then awaited its completion before granting a charter confirming the property. It is evident from the Bishop's letter that Edward's act of kindness did not leave it in the enjoyment of comforts beyond the need of an appeal to the general public. It will help the reader to understand our remarks if we reproduce

the letter and charter here. We give the spelling of the names of persons and places as found in Dugdale's work,[1] absurdly incorrect and inconsistent as such spelling is. As these documents are not quoted to prove anything connected with such names of persons and places, we need not trouble the reader with explanations. The translation is that of H. Longueville Jones.

Letter and Charter

(1) *The Bishop's Letter.*—To all the faithful in Christ, who shall see or hear these letters, Anian, by divine permission, the humble minister of the church of Bangor, eternal salvation in the Lord. Know that we have seen various charters of divers Princes to the Prior and Convent of the Valley of the Blessed Mary of Snowdon. That is to say, the charter of Lewelin the Great, over all the land of Kyndewewic ap Rennaut; also of the charter of Lewelin, son of Griffin, over all the lands of the sons of Ithael de Penard; also the charters of Lewelin, the son of Griffin, over all the land of the men of Trehan, at Kenynbeind and Lecheitaur; also the charter of the Lord Owen over all the Vill, which is called Tref Ybeyrd, in Kynind Meney; also the charter of the Lord Lewelin, son of Griffin, over all that land and place of Beckellers; also the charter of Lord David over all the land which Ierberd Vab Yerfeynt may have had, and Feraul at Epennant; also concerning the said lands we have seen Papal letters, confirmatory with bulls, not cancelled, not abolished, nor in any way weakened in effect. Whereupon, know all, that the said house of the Blessed Mary is the senior religious house in all Wales (except the Island of Saints, Bardigeya), and of better hospitality and of more common resort for the poor, and for the English and Welsh travellers, for those passing from England and West Wales to North Wales, and for those going from Ireland and North Wales into England. But, to the no small loss and common deficiency of all, the said house having been totally destroyed by an accidental fire, although in the time of hospitality, it must suffer the greatest destruction, has nevertheless been fully restored by the pious, Catholic, and liberal King, by the grace of God, Lord Edward. And because it is a pious act to assist the afflicted and oppressed, we, by the mercy of God, and the intercession of His Mother, and trusting in the suffrages of all saints, do mercifully relax forty days of the penance enjoined them to all the benefactors of the said house, assisting it from whatever quarters, who, from the goods granted them by God, have given to it pious alms and other favours, so that they be truly penitent and confessed. In testimony of which, etc., given at Maesyllan, on the octave of the Annunciation of the Blessed Mary, in the year of our Lord, 1286.

[1] *Monasticon Anglicanum*, vol. vi. p. 200 (new edition).

(2) *The Charter of Edward I.*—The King to the archbishop, etc., greeting. Brother Madoc, Prior of the House of the Blessed Mary of Bethkelert, and brother Hugh, fellow canon with himself of the same house, having come to us, have humbly and devoutly supplicated us that, whereas all the buildings of the Priory itself, and the charters and others their instruments given to that Priory concerning different lands and tenements, have unfortunately been, together with the same instruments, lately burnt, we should for the sake of charity take care to make for them and their successors, serving God in the same place, some security for the lands and tenements aforesaid; and because the venerable father, Anian, Bishop of Bangor, has sent to us his letters patent, by which he testified that he had seen the charters of divers Princes granted to the Prior and Convent of the aforesaid place, viz. the charter of Lewelin the Great, concerning all the land of Kindeluluyt, of Pennant; the charter of Lewelin, son of Griffin, concerning all the lands of the sons of Izthael of Pennard; the charter of Lewelin, son of Griffin, concerning all the land of the men of Treban, at Kenynbemd and Letheycaur; the charter of the Lord Owen concerning all the Vill, which is called Frefynerd in Kimidmeney; the charter of Lewelin, son of Griffin, concerning all that land and place of Betkelert; the charter of the Lord David concerning all the land of Adver, in Epennant; the charter of the Lord David of all the land of Legwaret, Vayre, Gneyr, of Penaut; and the charter concerning all the land which Iorverd Vab Yrefeyrat and Steyraul had in Epennant. We, piously compassionating the innumerable losses which the aforesaid Prior and Convent have sustained by the aforesaid combustion, and giving full faith to the laudable testimony of the aforesaid Bishop concerning the inspection of the aforesaid charters, do, for the salvation of our own souls and of the souls of our predecessors and heirs, accept the aforesaid donations of the aforesaid lands made to the aforesaid Priory by the aforesaid donors; and, for ourselves and our heirs, as far as in us lies, do grant and confirm them to the aforesaid Prior and Convent, according as they have hitherto reasonably used these donations, and to their successors for ever. These being witnesses: the Venerable Father R. (Burnell), Bishop of Bath and Wells, our chancellor; Edmund, Earl of Lancaster, our brother; Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Glocester and Hereford; Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, our relation; Edmund de Mortimer; William de Breus; Robert, son of John (Fitz John?); William de Leyburne, and others. Given by our hand, at Canterbury, the 10th day of May.

As the charter contains fuller details than the letter, we may naturally infer that the King follows the particulars given by the Prior, or else that the Bishop is less minute in his letter to the public than in his letter to the King.

Forced Liberality.—The King was not the only man to whom a report of the calamity was sent. The Prior had

interests other than the temporal ones, and he had to see to its ecclesiastical standing and rights. The "Papal letters, confirmatory with bulls, not cancelled, not abolished, nor in any way weakened in effect," were of as much importance to the Prior as the charters which had been consumed in the flames. It was his first business, then, to acquaint the Archbishop of what had happened, making it a matter of conscience to tell all he knew about the affair to his superior in the service of God. What facts, then, had he to place before the Archbishop, of which he would rather pretend ignorance in his letter to the King? It is our answer to this question that brings out the "forced" nature of the act of "the pious, Catholic, and liberal King" in restoring, at his own cost, the destroyed Priory.

When Edward found that the Welsh people, under the leadership of Llewelyn and his brother David, were giving a very practical expression to their dislike of the fines and annual payments imposed upon them by him, he made up his mind to do away with Wales altogether as a separate state. But he knew how impossible it would be for him to reduce the country to submission while the Welsh remained in possession of their natural fortresses—the thick forests that covered their mountain slopes. The steep rocks of Eryri were completely covered for more than half-way up to their highest peaks, so that the district was the most impenetrable in the whole of Wales. After the fall of Llewelyn and the imprisonment of David, we are told that "in order to prevent any more rebellious attempts of the Welsh, he cut down all the woods in Wales, wherein, in any time of danger, they were wont to hide and save themselves."

About the beginning of the autumn of 1282 (if our information is correct as to date) he issued a decree that an army of wood-fellers should be levied, and that they should be armed with axes, in order to facilitate the course of his men and to deprive the enemy of their defences. It mattered little to him that such a vicious course was contrary to the customs of war, even among the most barbarous nations; and it was of no consequence at all that the Welsh prized their forests as much as

he did his—and here the reader may refresh his memory with regard to the cruel forest laws then in force in England. Without the slightest deference to honour and the rules of war, he pushed on his tyrannical plans, and sought to satisfy his unsatiable greed and ambition.

Early in the year 1283 he successfully penetrated, with the strength of his army, up the Vale of Conway as far as Dolwyddelen Castle; and, a little later, the regiment which he had left in Anglesey, to act as a kind of garrison, crossed the Menai Straits, and worked its way on to the vales of Eryri. There is a tradition in this district that an English army, after a successful contest with the Welsh, crossed over Meillionen mountain into Nant Colwyn at a place which is called Bwlch y Saeson (the Pass of the English). We have not been able to trace any account of an English army penetrating into these vales before the submission of the Welsh, except the armies of Edward. This regiment was working its way, no doubt, to meet the army quartering at Dolwyddelen, in order to join in the great attack on the Snowdonian stronghold of the Welsh. We are not told anything further of the fate of this regiment; if it did succeed to reach Dolwyddelen, it must have been after a bold struggle with a hundred obstacles. What we are certain of is this, that Edward's men soon began their work of devastation. They felled the trees in the most ruthless fashion, and then cast what they could to the lakes, and burnt the rest. Tons upon tons of the stumps and trunks of these trees have been unearthed from time to time, and some are still being brought to light. The marks of the hatchets are quite distinct, and some of them are encased in a thick covering of charcoal, which has acted as an excellent preservative for them.

Now, to turn the above facts into account in discussing the matter before us, we again remind the reader of the time when the Priory was burnt down. It took fire at the very time that Edward's men were prosecuting their abominable work. It may have been "an accidental fire," as the Bishop puts it, since it was quite possible for their terrible conflagration to go beyond their control. It would be no unfair suggestion if we assumed that it was done wilfully. Indeed, probabilities are

against the King. He wilfully set fire to Strata Florida Abbey, though we have every reason to believe that the abbot was well-disposed toward him. The abbot had mistaken his own power, and "foolishly promised the King that on a certain day and at a certain place, he would bring the county of Cardigan into amity with the King; but when the King with an armed force was waiting for a very long time, not one of the Welshmen came to the appointed spot. Therefore the King said in a passion, 'Burn, burn,' and so the fire, which never cries 'Enough,' in like manner wrapped both the abbey and the country in a flame. To repair the damage and to assist in rebuilding the edifice, Edward made an allowance of £78, and in his deed added, as a condition, that the monks should maintain the highways and cut down the thickets."

We are now free to assume that owing to the friction existing between the King and the clergy of the country, Edward was not at all unwilling to give some of their institutions to the flames. But in a cooler moment he found that he had to reckon not only with valid "Papal letters, confirmatory with bulls," but also with John Peckham, Archbishop of Canterbury, "better known as *Friar John*, an exceedingly officious and litigious man." Peckham would welcome, at this time, any and every point that would give him a little advantage over Edward. He was greatly in favour at Rome, and many such instances as the above conflagrations were not necessary to bring the authority of the "sovereign pontiff" home to the King. Excommunication was the dread instrument that would cool his ardour and put out his fires; hence the "gracious" charter which Edward, in the fourteenth year of his reign, addresses to the Archbishop, and the priory "fully restored by the pious, Catholic, and liberal king, by the grace of God, Lord Edward."

Its Later History.—From its restoration to the "Dissolution of the Monasteries" there is nothing of great value on record. We have, however, ample evidence from the meagre records that the course of its life did not run smoothly. P. B. Williams[1] mentions a law-suit between the sons of

[1] See p. 23.

Tudor ap Madoc and Philip the Prior. It seems that David Llewelyn had bestowed on this house certain lands in Pennant Gwernogan which belonged to Tudor, and to which the Prince had no right. The sons of Tudor brought up their case before William de Grandison and R. de Stanedon at Carnarvon, and the verdict was given in their favour.

"Among the pleadings in Quo Warranto, 24 Edw. III. (*Record of Caernarvon*, pp. 166, 167), occurs one, alluded to above, of some consequence to the Priory itself, and also to the character of one or more of its Priors. This document states that the Prior was summoned to answer to the Prince upon a plea of Quo Warranto, and to show why he and his successors claimed to be quit of 'every vexation, talliage, and exaction of courts, and from secular service, and also from suit of mills and hundred courts, and all other courts throughout the whole domain of the Prince; and to have the offices of the bailiffs, raglots, ringilds and woodwards, and ammobragium, with wild animals and birds, over all their land in North Wales, and with all other rights in any way belonging to the Prince, as well concerning transgressions as forfeitures, so that no bailiffs nor ministers of the Prince or his heirs could have or require anything from the men or tenants of the lands of the Prior and his canons, but that the said Prior and canons should be free and quit of all amerciaments throughout the whole domain of the Prince, in whatsoever manner they might be liable to amerciaments; and if any of their tenants should be fined in the court of the Lord the Prince, the said Prior and canons were to have and receive these fines, contrary to the interest and dignity of the Prince, etc.'

(*Slater, Llandudno, Photo*).
The later Rev. Rd. Williams.

"In reply to this the Prior stated that Llewelyn ap

Gruffydd had granted by charter to one of his predecessors all the liberties above stated, to have and to hold for the benefit of this house 'in free and perpetual alms' for ever, 'and he produced the aforesaid charter, which testified the same thing, and of which the date was Kaernaruan, on the day of St. James the Apostle, in the twelve hundredth and seventy-first year of our Lord.' The Prior then related how one of his predecessors had appeared before King Edward I. after the conquest of Wales, and the Bishop of Bangor being present and testifying to the truth of his statement, had rehearsed the calamitous loss of the muniments of the house by fire, and that the King had then granted to the Priory a new charter, which he quoted at length. This document is here recited in the pleading the same as it has been above.

"Upon this John de Delves acutely observed that whereas the Prior had actually produced in court a charter which he asserted to be that granted by Llewelyn, and then had afterwards alleged that *all* the charters and muniments of his house had been destroyed by fire, and whereas it had been actually recognised in King Edward's charter above cited that they had been so destroyed, it was evident that the charter produced under the name of Llewelyn could in no wise be called, nor admitted to be, that very charter by which the privileges in question had been granted. And further, that it appeared by the seal itself of the charter that it had been newly sealed, and not at the time supposed by its date. Hence it followed that the charter was false and fabricated, and he claimed that judgment should pass if the Prior claimed his privileges by virtue of this document. He also claimed of the court that the Prior, on account of this counterfeiting and falsifying Prince Llewelyn's charter, should be committed to gaol as a seductor of the Lord Prince, and that all the liberties and possessions of the said house, that is to say, its temporalities, should be taken into the hands of the Prince.

"The Prior, in his justification, declared that he had not counterfeited this charter, nor was he guilty of any action of the kind, nor of any seduction, but that at the time when he

was made Prior of the aforesaid house he found that charter in the state in which it now was in his Priory. This he professed himself ready to verify to the court in any way it might determine, and on account of this he alleged this charter as good as true for the maintaining of his liberties.

"The charter appears to have been put in and examined, and the pleading states that it appeared manifestly a false and counterfeited one, because the wax with which it was sealed was 'new and recent,' while the date was seventy eight years previous, and that it was therefore of no avail to the Prior. It was then immediately granted by the court that all the liberties and temporalities of the Priory should be taken into the hands of the Prince, and the Prior is stated to have been committed to gaol. The place of his confinement is not mentioned, but it was probably at Caernarvon Castle, nor does it say anything as to the duration."[1]

The Prior afterwards recovered his "temporalities aforesaid" by paying a fine of one hundred shillings, under the bail of several men, whose names are given, and secured his liberation from gaol.

The following petition is also found in the *Record of Caernarvon*, on p. 220:—"The Prior and Convent represent by petition that a mill of theirs at Pennant Gwernogan, in Caernarvonshire, having been destroyed in time of war, they had agreed with one Llewelyn ap Conan that (they being incompetent to meet the expenses of doing so) he should rebuild the mill on condition of receiving half the profits until a certain time, and that this time being then expired, the King's officers had seized on that half of the mill, and therefore they petitioned for remedy of this grievance. Immediately after this follows the record of a petition from Llewelyn ap Llewelyn ap Conan, son of the above, stating the facts as mentioned in the former petition; and to this, as well as apparently to the preceding, answer is given that the Justiciary will inform himself of the manner and cause of this seizure, and the truth of the fact, and will acquaint the King therewith."

Unpleasant as the perusal of the above may be, we learn

[1] H. L. Jones's *Beddgelert Priory*.

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something of the life of these monastic lords after the heat of the revivals of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries had been spent. "Lewis Daron, a bard of the fifteenth century, in a poem (the purport of which is to solicit David, the Prior of Bethcelert, to bestow on John Wynne, of Gwydir, Esq., a fine bay horse which he possessed), extols the Prior for his liberality and learning. Hence we are led to suppose that this monk was very opulent, and a popular character in his time." This quotation suggests to us that they were men who lived shoulder to shoulder with the gentry of their time, possessing as they did similar landed interests, but being exempt from most of the claims made upon them by the laws and customs of the land.

Its Suppression.—The royal commission, under Edward III., which "was sent to verify the conditions of the religious property of this house," gave sufficient proof, if proof were needed, of the jealousy with which the institution and its Priors were watched. When a fair opportunity was given, the King's representatives did not hesitate to declare "that all the liberties and temporalities of the Priory should be taken into the hands of the Prince." After the establishment of the Royal Supremacy, and Thomas Cromwell's appointment as the King's vicegerent in ecclesiastical matters, "a visitation of the universities, the religious houses, and all other spiritual corporations in the kingdom" was ordered, and Henry VIII.'s ministers were not slow in finding an excuse for recommending the suppression of the Priory of Bedd Gelert.

In 1535 the property of the Priory was bestowed upon the Abbey of Chertsey, in Surrey, and in 1537, along with Chertsey itself, upon Bisham, in Berkshire. In 1539 the greater monasteries were as summarily dealt with as the smaller ones had been four years previously. Henry VIII. used the revenues which their temporal effects yielded to fill his own purse and to bribe his friends. Among these seemed to be the family of the Bodvels, to whom he gave the lands in Carnarvonshire. It is not easy to get at the facts with regard to the lands of the Priory in Anglesey, but the most probable account is this—a part of the property was handed

over to the Prydderchs, and much of the rest of the land there remained in the hands of the tenants.

Mr. Rowlands says that "the tenants here (Tre'r Beirdd), as many as there are, both free and independent, have ever since the demolition of the Convent escaped paying anything in the way of rent to anybody; and all have been regarded as most absolute lords of their own soil." Many of these have been bought up since, and have fallen into the hands of the family of the Prydderchs of Myfyrion—represented in Mr. Rowlands's time by Mr. Pierce Lloyd of Llanidan—and other men of means. He takes care to mention that some of the landowners of Tre'r Beirdd "claim their lands by hereditary descent" from a time anterior to the Dissolution. The learned antiquarian offers an explanation for the unusual privilege which the tenants of the township of Tre'r Beirdd enjoyed—that of "retaining in their own hands the old rents which were formerly paid to the lords of the feuds." His first suggestion—"that the fraternity favoured the suppression of the accounts of that house, or their secret withdrawal by their own dependants"—is made unnecessary by a more plausible one. "The lynx eyes of that period were deceived by the false name Trefynerd, as it occurs in the royal deed, by which appellation there was no township known in that part of the country." It is not the first nor the last instance we have of indifference to the correct spelling and pronunciation of Welsh names bringing its due reward.

(*Wickens, Bangor, Photo*).
The Rev. J. Jenkins, B.A.
(Vicar).

It seems that the rectorial rights of Llanidan, together with the advowson of the vicarage, were sold by Queen Elizabeth to Edmund Downham and Peter Ashton, and these again sold them to the Prydderchs. The property of the Priory in

Dolwyddelen, Pennant, Pennardd, Cefnyfan, Llecheiddior, Trefan, etc., need not be followed up, even if we had materials for that purpose.

Its Order and Priors.—Mr. H. L. Jones says that "it was a house of Canons Regular, of the order of St. Augustine, but of how many the brethren consisted is not said." We do not know how this information has been got at, but we have seen nothing to contradict it. Newell, in speaking of the old monasteries and the old monastic customs of the Welsh, says, "There was another old monastery too, so Gerald tells us, at the foot of Snowdon, probably at Beddgelert, which in his days had to fight for its very existence with the Cistercian monks of Aberconway, who sought to annex it as a farm or a subordinate cell, and with this view did their utmost to procure its destruction or to force its inhabitants to accept the rule of their order. Eventually, however, after much trouble and expense, the Snowdon monks obtained letters of protection from the Pope. These monks were also Coelites or Culdees, and are described as 'clergy, devoted servants of God, living in common in a holy assembly, and after the apostolic custom, having nothing of their own, and bound to no special monastic or canonic rule, given to chastity and abstinence, and especially conspicuous for works of charity and for hospitality,' after the manner of their communities which existed before St. Benedict framed his rule."[1]

The reader will see from the above quotation that the order of monks was of a totally different spirit from the Cistercian propagandists. Indeed, the very description of the Culdees, as quoted above, would imply that. It is only natural, then, to find them opening their doors to an order like that of the Augustines. This order was constituted in 1061 by Pope Alexander II. There does not seem to have been many of their houses in Wales, but we find Lanthony, Haverfordwest, Carmarthen, and Bedd Gelert among them.

Pennant's conjecture, when he says "There is reason to suppose they might have been of that class which was called *Gilbertines*, and consisted of both men and women, who lived

[1] *A History of the Welsh Church*, p. 276.

under the same roof, but strictly separated from each other by a wall," need not be taken seriously. He says that he discovered a piece of ground near the church called *Dôl y Lleian*, or *The Meadow of the Nun*. Surely something would have come out in the proceedings of the royal commission, before referred to, or some hint would have been left to that effect by tradition had there been anything in that. Besides, "the meadow" is not called *Dôl y Lleian*, but *Dôl y Llan*, or *The Meadow of the Sacred Enclosure*. Pennant probably got led astray by the peculiar sound which Merionethshire people give to the "a" in speaking. They pronounce *Llan* as if it were written *Llean*.

The Priory, as we should have said sooner, was dedicated to St. Mary, and not far from the village was a well, once consecrated to the service of the monks, with the waters of which they wrought their miracles of healing. Perhaps we ought also to mention the bee-farming which the monks encouraged, probably from their love of the good old British drink "the nectareous *medd*," and for the sake of their wax. The bees were thought to have escaped the contamination of the fall, by the special blessing of God, when they departed from paradise; therefore no mass was allowed to be celebrated but by the light of their wax. The Prior himself had a share of the bees from some of his tenants.

A few of the names of the Priors have come down to us, but we have hardly any particulars about them other than those already given.

Name.	
Madoc; the name occurs . . .	14 Edward I.
Llewelyn; appointed Prior May 20th .	15 Edward II.
John de Leyn; appointed Prior April 10th	11 Edward III.
Philip; the name occurs . . .	24 Edward III.
Cynhelin; the name occurs . . .	34 Edward III.
David Conway, the last Prior . .	Henry VIII.

Pennant, wrongly, gives the last name *Edward* Conway.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CHURCH

The Priory Chapel.—The reader will naturally feel curious, after reading so much about the Priory, to know how much of it still presents itself to his gaze, as he looks upon the only structure which makes any pretence of having some connection with the old institution. There exists but very little, and there is still less to be seen. Since the buildings of the thirteenth century were so well made, one would naturally be led to expect that a good deal of the old Priory chapel remained. There is a tradition in the neighbourhood, which is supported by no documentary evidence, that the Priory took fire the second time in the sixteenth century, and that it was almost entirely destroyed. While digging a grave on the south side of the church some fifty years ago, an eye-witness says that he saw two distinct layers of charcoal. The upper layer, which was about six inches thick, was within a foot of the surface; the other was about six inches lower down, and was at least twelve inches thick. These layers of charcoal are very probably the marks of the two disastrous fires of the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries. It seems almost certain that we have here an explanation of the disappearance of the records and documents of the Priory.

Between four and five score years ago there still remained an extensive old ruin on the southern side of the church, and this the old people called "Plas Prior," which being interpreted is "The Prior's Palace." The foundations of these still exist in some places. When enlarging the churchyard in the years 1849-50, and while cutting the foundation of the present southern wall of what may be called the old churchyard, the workmen had to cut through the foundations of three walls. The first of these was opposite the south-eastern corner of the church; the second was opposite the south-western corner; and the third was some twenty-four feet

more to the west—all running from north to south. In the year 1853, when digging a grave immediately in front of the porch, in the direction of the last-mentioned wall, a piece of an old foundation or wall was discovered. It had been built with lime mortar, and beneath it were found twenty-four coins bearing the date of Henry III.'s reign. This gives us a clue to an extension that was made at that time to the Priory; and the old custom of placing articles bearing the date of the year, and the day in some cases, is still common in these parts when laying the foundation stones of sacred edifices.

Another incident happened some sixty or seventy years ago. The stump of an old tree was being uprooted within the area marked out by the middle and the western wall-foundations referred to above, when large stone steps were discovered. They seemed to be leading down to a cellar, and four of them were laid bare, but nothing of importance was further found. A man, who acted as sexton for many years in this churchyard, tells us that the old Priory wall can still be traced within the new burying-ground. It runs right through the middle of the graves which lie next the path on the Aberglaslyn side of it, and it reaches out about twelve feet into the field. The eastern wall of the old building must reach from that point to the wall of the church, intersecting the churchyard wall as before mentioned. Can the parishioners not do something to preserve what remains of these old traces? Fortunately, graves are not so much in demand in this parish of enviable longevity that even the narrow strips occupied by these old foundations *must* be utilised!

Measuring the length and the breadth of the ground covered by these remains, from the wall of the choir, that was on the northern side of the body of the church, to the old foundation-wall on the southern side, and from the old foundation west of the church to the eastern wall of the church itself, we find that the buildings of the Priory covered one hundred and five feet by one hundred and thirty-five.

Before its First Renovation.—Mr. Jones, in his section on the "Architecture of the Abbey," is undoubtedly right when he says that "in assuming that the present parochial church

of Beddgelert was the conventual church, no great error is probably made. The architecture corresponds to the date of the re-edification in the time of Edward I., and it is not likely that the population of the surrounding district, at that period, required a separate building for their accommodation. At least no traces of any other religious edifice, no tradition of the former existence of one, remain anywhere in the neighbourhood; and in a country like Wales, where tradition has been so carefully preserved, and may so generally be

(*From an old Drawing.*) The Priory Chapel.

depended upon, this circumstance may be taken as a convincing negative proof." But whilst satisfied that this is the same church as that into which "the barefooted monks, each in his grey habit, with his leathern girdle, his crucifix, and his rosary," marched to perform their spiritual exercises, there are still many things that we should like to know about it between then and the end of the last century. We may be able to "picture to ourselves the inflexible confessor and the timid noviciate, hear the authoritative question and the half-reluctant reply, and listen to the chaunt and the anthem, now

swelling in accents low and clear, now returning, and now floating away as if in melancholy sadness," but there have been generations since those days, each one of which has had some influence in bringing about its present condition. Irregularity, indifference, and ignorance did no doubt prevail in the days of the Priory, but coarseness and profanity have been rampant since then, and they have done their part with their usual ruthlessness.

After the dissolution of the monasteries, with the exception of the second fire above referred to, we hear practically nothing of the history of this church until the dawn of the great movement which brought the Calvinistic Methodist body into existence. We then hear of things said and done by men who had more hatred for the fanatics than love for the Church, which would not be edifying if repeated. The church walls, we are told, were not too good for playing ball against them, nor was the Sabbath too sacred and holy a day for the exercise. The church, and the God to whose service it was consecrated, were of but little concern to the great majority of the parishioners. We might therefore naturally expect silence on the question of repairs and renovations. Thanks to the good old work of the earlier centuries these were not so much, nor so frequently, called for as now.

There exist two old prints of the church before the renovations of 1828-30. They are evidently prints of the same building, as far as the general character of the structure goes. But it is equally evident that there is sufficient variety in matters of detail to justify our considering one as the primitive form of the other.

The old building has been sketched from a point looking north-west, so that the southern and eastern aspects are clearly brought out in the print. It has the appearance of a very old structure, surrounded by a wild growth of shrubs and bramble bushes. On the southern side stand two young trees, successfully striving against the vigorous attacks of the haughty undergrowth. At the western end of that same side we see a door, through which the monks passed into the solemn silence of the main choir. This door came, after the

destruction of the old Priory buildings, to be known as *Drws Gwyr Nanmor ac Ardudwy* (the Door of the Men of Nanmor and Ardudwy). In 1829 three steps were found on the outside of this door, showing clearly that the floor of the church was on a higher level than that of the Priory. The earth had so accumulated by the time this print was taken, that not a suspicion of the existence of these steps could be got from appearances. Stretching close up to the roof, on the same side, are two windows of six lights each. Perhaps a better description would be, two windows with six panes each, having an Early English arch, with two perpendicular sashes and one horizontal sash, dividing the other two in half. If there were buttresses on the southern side they are not in sight in the print.

At the eastern end are "three lofty and well-proportioned lancet windows, of plain moulding and rather wide splays." The lower portions seem as if they had been bricked up, and the upper portion of the middle window seems as if it had been boarded up, awaiting the time when the parishioners would be ripe for repairs and renovations. The eastern end of the northern aisle is also in sight, having on the top a small window, which seems just large enough to prevent utter darkness from reigning within—indeed, it seems to us more of a way of entrance, which was closed by a small wooden door. Leading up to this was a flight of steps, made of irregularly projecting stones; and in the middle of the wall there was an isolated stone, which projected out to receive the left foot, for the convenience of entrance and exit through the window. What can possibly have been the use of that window? It must have led into a dark penance cell of the monks, where offending brothers were sent to do penance for their offences. One old woman, still living in the parish, tells us that when she was a child "the dark chamber" was a place of terror to her young mind. If she did any mischief, or refused to obey her seniors, she was told that she would be put in "the dark chamber," and this threat invariably had its desired effect. The door leading from the chancel into this dark room may be seen to-day, built up by a thin wall, which leaves a good recess.

A heavy buttress, of no great height, supported the building at the very point where the aisle wall and the church wall joined. A low wall runs out from the church into the field, enclosing a small piece of ground on its northern side. In the background is a portion of a small house near the churchyard gate, and the whole of Ty Isaf, surrounded by trees and sheltered by the hills beyond. We have absolutely failed to get any hint as to when these features were altered, and the structure, from which print number two is taken, was put up.

Before the Second Renovation.—We are rather fortunate in having a print of the church as it was in 1827, taken from the same point as the first. The two trees which we see in the first sketch have grown considerably, and the difference in their size in the two prints may serve as some indication of the time that elapsed between the two renovations. The undergrowth had been cleared away, and the scythe on the man's shoulder tells us that this part of the field had been under cultivation for several years. Drws Gwyr Nanmor ac Ardudwy is distinctly sketched, and its Early Pointed arch is brought clearly to view. "The arch of another doorway could be traced mid-way in this wall," but it is not marked in the print. Light was admitted from the southern side by two small lancet windows, near the western end, and a Perpendicular window of four lights on the eastern end. The eastern lancet windows seem to have been opened up from top to bottom, and the window and the projecting stones on the end of the aisle are done away with, though the dark chamber still existed.

Of this building we have a fairly faithful account, from which we gather that it was one of the most beautiful country churches in the whole county. Its roof, as the sketch shows, was exceedingly high and steep. The body of the church measured externally eighty feet by thirty. The northern aisle of St. Mary's Choir, which measured sixteen feet wide, was separated from the main choir by two wide and beautifully moulded Early Pointed arches, and a Perpendicular window of four lights admitted a flood of daylight into its area. This choir was surpassingly beautiful. Its sittings were higher than

the heads of their occupants, in front of each of whom was a round hole facing the Table of the Lord. They were made of old polished black oak, and skilfully carved all over. A magnificent screen, made of the same material, was placed in the arches to separate the two aisles. The ceiling of the church was covered all over with carved wood-work, and the

Drawing by H. L. Jones, "Arch. Camb.")

Bedd Gelert Church (before 1830).

sides with various images. Every window was filled with beautifully coloured glass, and who can describe the magnificent effect of the light as it fell upon the carved wood-work through these illuminated panes! It is said that the peasant folk were inspired with a certain awe and fear whenever they recalled the effect, and that they could never approach the church at night on that account.

Before the Third Renovation.—We now come to the time

when the famous renovations of 1830 were made. In the vestry minute-book we find the following entry under the date of 20th November 1827. "It was agreed by the parishioners present at the meeting, that authority be given to Griffith Jones, Hafodydd Brithion, and Evan Pierce, Dinas Moch, Wardens for the present year, to borrow the sum of £100 for the purpose of renovating the church, and that we undertake to pay the same, with interest, out of the church rate." Exactly two months later we have the minutes of a meeting convened for the purpose of considering the estimates which had been sought in the meantime. "It was resolved that the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates, produced by Griffith Griffiths and Evan Williams, be adopted, and that the repairs and alterations and other work, therein contained, be let to the said Griffith Griffiths and Evan Williams for the sum of £295." Six months later the vestry meeting considers the roof, and decides that "the said church be roofed with Rag or Ton Slates of good qualitity from the Festiniog Quarries." It was also resolved that "the Choir be newly flagged . . . and that the Altar be raised eight or nine inches from the rest of the Choir, and also flagged in like manner," all at the cost of £35. At another vestry meeting, held 9th November 1829, it was resolved "that the Plan now produced to the meeting be adopted (subject to the approbation of the Landed Proprietors of the said Parish of Bedd Gelert), and that the expense of the seats and pews to be erected pursuant to the same are to be discharged by an equal rate upon the several properties of the said Landed Proprietors." At the meeting of 25th May 1830, and the adjourned meeting of 31st May, the contract for the erection of the altar, reading seat, and desk, font, and pews was let to the above-mentioned Evan Williams, Tyhen, for the sum of £132, the work to be completed before 1st January 1831.

From these facts we can have a fairly good idea of the kind of renovations that were made. The total outlay upon these so-called repairs was not more than £460, and the magnificent old furniture was all to be substituted. Renovations upon the lines of the old structure could not be carried

on for eight times the sum that was spent; and we do not exactly know in what frame of mind "the pious few" of the parish went to work. But one thing is certain, and that is that it is very difficult to speak of their work except as a piece of vicious Vandalism.

The northern choir was demolished, and the area which it covered was made part of the open ground which surrounded the church. The two beautiful arches which separated it from

From a Drawing.)

Bedd Gelert Church (1830-79).

the body of the church were built up, and a window placed in the upper half of each of them. Pieces of the pillar of the arch nearest the altar were cut out, in order to fix an ugly old pulpit, which perched the preacher far up above the people to whom he spoke. A common ceiling came down almost low enough to be touched by a walking-stick in an average-sized man's hand. This covered up the top part of the lancet windows at the eastern end. A high wainscot covered the door which once communicated with the eastern portion of the lancet windows. On each side of the tiny altar were large

pews; the one on the northern side belonged to the Wyatts, Bryn Gwynant, and the other to the Priestleys, Cae Ddafydd. All the pews were very deep, and made the church look exceedingly heavy. At the western end stood an old gallery, which had been used for generations, off and on, as the school-room of the village, where all kinds and conditions of school-masters and schoolmistresses had been striving to enlighten the ignorant.

Outside, the building looked not much better than a barn. Were it not for the belfry and the porch, it might easily have been taken as one of the primitive Nonconformist meeting houses, where architecture was a forbidden element. The southern side was pulled down almost to the ground, and so all traces of the old doors and windows of the Priory church were swept away. It thus happened that only the two ends of the outside of the building were left. The roof was low, and the windows in the southern wall were exceedingly plain. But, one may impatiently ask, what became of the coloured windows and the carved wood-work? The wood-work was sold to the inhabitants of the parish, who chopped up some of it for fire-wood, and turned the rest into household furniture! Nearly all the older families can boast of some piece of furniture made from the wood-work of the old church. The windows were realised, and sold to an English firm, in order, it is said, to have money to defray the cost of the renovations! We must lay the whole of this miserable business at the door of the misapplied antagonism to all adornment which possessed the Welsh Christians of the time. It was the same spirit as that which made it a sin for one to part his hair, for which crime many an honest young Christian was plainly told that he had no real religion, and that, in consequence, he forfeited his privileges as a church member.

The Present Building.—It is not necessary to go much into detail on this structure, but we cannot but feel grateful to the gentlemen who had most to do with a restoration which has produced such a good result. "As the walls are stout," says H. L. Jones in 1845, "and some of the main features of the church still exist, the possibility evidently remains of a

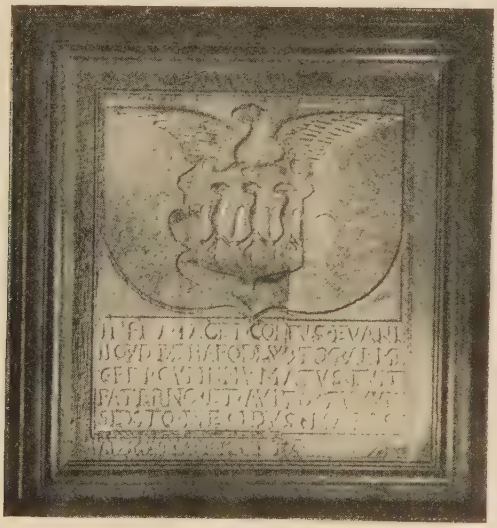
good restoration being made at some future and more enlightened period." This period took thirty-five years more to appear, and then we have the following entry in the vestry minute-book: "Proposed by James Wyatt, Esq., Bryn Gwynant, and seconded by Mr. Richard Humphrey, Goat Hotel, and

Bedd Gelert Church.

carried, That it is desirable to petition for a faculty to carry out the proposed Restoration of Bedd Gelert Church, together with the extension of a transept on the north side of the said church."

The work was done with excellent taste, and the transept

has restored the two Early Pointed arches as part of the interior of the church. The transept really has no other reason for its existence than to bring these valued pieces of ancient workmanship into relief; the church is quite large enough for all purposes without it. Its architecture is that of Decorated Gothic, having at the northern end of the transept a fine large window beautifully designed, and on each side of the same a window of two lights. The lancet windows at the eastern



Ifan Llwyd's Memorial Slab.

end have been completely restored, and filled with finely coloured glass, depicting various Biblical scenes, under which is set the following tender tribute :—

To the glory of God and loving memory of her husband, James Wyatt, Esq., of Bryn Gwynant, in this Parish, with whom she lived in happy wedded life for upwards of 60 years, this window was erected by his widow, Mistress Anne Jane Wyatt. He died 16th January 1882, in the eighty-seventh year of his age.

In front of this window stands an altar adorned with candlesticks and a crucifix. The old door connecting the eastern portion of the two choirs may now be seen, and everything that bears the stamp of antiquity has been brought back to light, with one exception. The majority of the old memorial plates and tablets that once hung upon the walls are now placed out of sight under the flooring of the transept. We should be glad to see these made accessible, even if it is out of place to expect them to be restored.

The southern wall admits light through four windows, three of which have double lights and one a single light—this is on the western end of the wall. On the inside of this wall hangs an old oak tablet, sacred to the memory of a distinguished old character in the parish, on which is carved a Latin inscription and the crest of the family:—

Infra jacet corpus Evani Lloyd
De Hafodlwyfog, Armigeri,
Qui Inhumatus fuit Paterno et Avito tumulo sexto
Die Idus Maias A.D. 1678, Annos aetatis 78.

Near this hangs another oak tablet, on which is fixed a brass tablet of the same shape, bearing the inscription :—

Underneath lyeth ye Body of
Richard Anwyl, Esq., of Dolfriog, who Died
the Fourth day of Feby. 1742, aged 32.

Above the inscription are three eaglets, which formed the crest of the Anwyls.

On an old-fashioned piece of oak, in the south-east corner of the chancel, we find the following letters and figures :—

M. W. ESQR.
O. I. W. 1783 09 83

There are other tablets on the walls, which the interested reader may inspect for himself at first hand. We cannot, however, pass by the handsome lectern, which stands before the chancel, without a word. It is a very important addition to the points of interest in the interior of the church. It is a large, strong eagle on the wing, beautifully carved, and

supported by a firm oak stand. A neat brass plate gives every necessary explanation :—

To the Glory of God, and in Memory of the Rev. Daniel Vawdrey, M.A., of Plas Gwynant, in this Parish, who entered into his rest on the 8th day of November 1896, aged 89 years, this Lectern was placed in this house of prayer where he used to worship, by LL. B. V., D. V., and T. S. V.

The initials stand for the names of the late Rev. Daniel Vawdrey's nephews, who still take great interest in the parish and its church.

(*Kingsley, Carnarvon, Photo.*)

The Old Communion Service.

By the door stands a baptismal font, inscribed with words in the "Alphabet of the Bards," and immediately opposite this is the vestry room—a very tiny room containing treasures of great value, which the ordinary visitor never sees. These are three valuable silver articles used in administering the Lord's Supper, carefully kept in wash-leather bags. Two of them—the chalice and the paten—are the gift of John Williams, a London goldsmith. The chalice is engraved with the figures of the three Marys, the centre position being naturally given to the Virgin Mary.

The following Latin words are inscribed beneath :—

Donum Johanis Williams, Aurificis regis, 1610.

Underneath the paten is engraved the arms of the giver. The set seems to have been incomplete up to Christmas 1891, when James B. Elkington, Esq., who then stayed at Craflwyn, presented the church with a silver flagon. This also bears an inscription :—

Presented to Bedd Gelert Church
By James B. Elkington, December 25th, 1891.

By a happy coincidence, we find that what was lacking in the gift of the generous old Royal *Goldsmith* of the seventeenth century, has been made up by the generosity of the well-known firm of Royal *Silversmiths.*

Perhaps mention should be made of the removal of the memorial stone slabs that were taken from the aisle of the church during the renovations of 1881-82. We have made no mention of the small recess in the southern wall of the chancel, which may be a trace of the old building, though we are told that the whole of the south wall is new. The arch separating the chancel from the body of the church is an entirely new feature, belonging to the last restoration.

The living is a perpetual curacy of very moderate value, and is the gift of the Priestleys. It used to be joined to Llanfrothen, and supplied by the same minister up to the year 1848, when the Rev. John Jones, B.A., was appointed perpetual curate of this parish alone. The present incumbent is the Rev. John Jenkins, B.A., who was lately appointed to succeed the late Rev. Richard Williams, a Christian gentleman much beloved by all the parishioners, of whatever persuasion. He ministered to the parishioners for nineteen years, and passed away a comparatively young man, Easter 1898. Mr. Jenkins was appointed while senior curate of Ynyscynhaiarn, at Portmadoc, where his honest and unassuming work was much appreciated.

St. Mary's is certainly a church with a history, and will always be one of interest. The illustrious and the obscure

have joined within its walls in the worship of the Maker of All, the former as a visitor seeking temporary obscurity and repose among the lonely hills, and the other as a native son, dreaming of a time when glory and fame would swell his breast with pride, after he had pushed himself out from between these heights, into the expanse beyond. Many of these native sons, who have reached — not exactly glory or fame—but worldly success, have hopelessly longed for the repose which their native hills afford, and have yearned in vain for the peaceful Sabbath of their younger days. Many of them would give their all if it were only possible for them to pass the remnant of their days under the towering peaks of Eryri, and know that they would find their final rest by the side of this house of God.

CHAPTER IX

THE GRAVEYARD

Its Enlargement.—The graveyard of the original church was very small, so small that one at first wonders how it ever could have possibly served its purpose for such a long period. The custom, which was so general, of burying within the walls of churches and cloisters, and the absence of tombstones to mark burial places of bygone generations, probably explains the question. Many of the best families did not need the graveyard, and the same places were turned into use time after time, without any considerations of prior claims. The limits of the old graveyard are not difficult to get at. The wall which enclosed it on its eastern side, ran from the eastern corner of the house by the gate, to the buttress by the little window of the vestry room. One may easily be misled by the wall, separating a small enclosure from the field, which we see in the oldest of the prints, into thinking that that enclosure was an unused part of the churchyard; but that little piece

was outside the graveyard. The southern wall was just as it is now, only that it had a little strip joining it to the porch of the church.

The first move towards enlarging the "acre of God" was taken in 1848, when the Rev. John Jones, B.A., communicated with the late F. J. Walker-Jones, Esq., Carnarvon, with the view of obtaining from him a plot of ground for the purpose. This gentleman was then the proprietor of all the land surrounding the church, and all that lay between the church and Bryn Du, including the field where Gelert's grave is. He was the Revising Barrister of North Wales, so that he was obliged to make less of his actual home than he otherwise would have, and consequently was not very well able to give much personal attention to this part of his interesting estate. But his memory is still revered in the parish as a generous and very kind-hearted gentleman, whose agent was hardly ever asked to refuse a favour.

The following letter, addressed to the Rev. John Jones, B.A., and read at a vestry meeting held at Ty Ucha' (Saracen's Head) on January 4, 1849, will give the reader a very pleasant impression of Mr. Walker-Jones, and will supply him also with information concerning the enlarging of the burial ground.

CARNARVON, *23rd Nov.* 1848.

SIR—I regret that I have been obliged by illness and likewise by other business to delay acknowledging your letter of the 16th inst. for so long a period. In company with Mr. O. Jones, the agent for the Bedd Gelert property, I viewed the proposed enlargement of the churchyard then, and certain ground was staked out for the purpose in my presence. I am equally inclined now as then to allot any reasonable quantity of land for the desired accommodation, but am at the same time equally at a loss to discover how the conveyance of the land is to be made by me. The facts are these. I have only a life estate in the property, and until my eldest child (now in his seventeenth year) shall attain his majority, no valid title can, I am afraid, be made to the land so given by me. Mr. Owen Jones seemed to think that the ground would be accepted subject to a *promise* that the grant by me should be ratified by my son when he comes of age; but as a *lawyer*, I am afraid the Bishop would not consecrate a spot which would be subject to any dispute as to title. If the difficulty can be got over, I repeat, I have no objection on my part to make.—I am, sir, yours very truly, F. J. WALKER-JONES.

So confident was the meeting that Mr. Walker-Jones's son was worthy of his sire, that steps were immediately taken to proceed with the work. A Mr. Griffiths was asked "to get a new coping for the old wall, according to his judgment." £2 were allowed for removing the old wall, and the new wall, which was let out to a contractor at 15d. per yard, was to be completed by April 1, 1849. The Bishop never asked questions about the legal intricacies of the new space, but reconsecrated a spot that had been considered holy ground as far back as the seventh century, at least. Mr. Walker-Jones's eldest son never lived to ratify his promise, and the present heir, and only survivor in the male line, honourably discharged his father's gracious bond.

The Second Extension.—Some two years after the completion of the last restoration it was once more thought that the graveyard was too small. The Burial Laws Amendment Act, 1880, had made matters more easy for the Nonconformist consciences, and greater use was made of the burial facilities of the parish church. At a meeting of the vestry, held April 19, 1884, it was proposed that a Burial Board be elected for the purpose of extending the churchyard. An amendment was moved that the extension be proceeded with without a Board; this was lost, and the mover demanded a poll. We find, however, that a Board was formed on May 17, 1884. The very large addition that was made by this Burial Board is the piece of ground on the south side of the old ground, which is entered from without the gate by an entrance of its own. A broader-minded generation will connect the old and the new grounds either by means of a gate or by removing "the middle wall of partition," and so unite the resting-places of those whose spirits are one in Christ.

The church was once surrounded by large and luxuriant ash-trees, whose branches, together with those of the old yew-tree, which still thrives, added much to the beauty of the spot. "Against the walls were wild raspberry bushes, offering, in due season, abundance of fruit on holy ground."

Graves and Epitaphs.—There are but few very old gravestones in the churchyard, as it was not customary of old to

put stones to keep green the memory of the departed. Even for years after the custom began, none but the well-to-do people could afford to follow it. The oldest, those of the Wynns of Ty Isaf, are not of earlier date than the year 1661. These lie beneath the peaceful shelter of the old yew-tree. The next in order of antiquity are the memorial stones on the graves of Corlwyni and Hafod Garegog—the former in the western, and the latter in the southern portion of the grave-yard. The Hafod Garegog family had two graves—one about half-way between the porch and the yew-tree, and the other nearer the south wall. Local tradition says that the latter is the grave of Rhys Goch Eryri; and if this be correct, the old bard was buried within the precincts of the Priory. The spot where the grave is lies right in the middle of the ruins spoken of above.

The actual spot where the grave of the revered bard lies has been a matter of dispute, and it may not be at all out of place to dwell a little on the point here. In an article on "Moel y Gest," the late Ellis Owen, Cefnymeusydd—a genial poet and litterateur—suggested that Rhys Goch was buried under the yew-tree. This was denied by one who had good ground for his opinion; and Glasynys, a man possessed of far more genius for invention than research, characterised the refuting statements as "an old woman's fable." To give his hard words, in a letter on the subject to the *Brython* (vol. iii. p. 394), the colour of plausibility, he quotes three verses (*Englynion*) purporting to be from an old manuscript, and composed by William Lleyn. But the trick was exposed; the style of the *Englynion*, and the unevenness of their composition, made it clear to the initiated that they were not the work of the astute, precise, and finished bard of Lleyn. Had Glasynys proceeded to uphold the conjecture of his friend Ellis Owen by trying to prove that the Wynns of Ty Isaf and the Wynns of Hafod Garegog were of the same family, and that they were descended from Rhys Goch, the futile effort might have been spoken of with deference; and until such an identity is proved, it is vain to assert that Rhys was buried under the yew-tree. Instead of that he pretends to quote from an old manuscript, which

was as fictitious as the one from which he maintained the legend of Llewelyn and his dog had been taken.[1]

In the absence of written documents no one will dispute that the highest authority on the matter is local traditions. In such a case it is folly to dispute them, even though they may be entirely opposed to the capricious conjectures of the most keen and astute historian. On this matter tradition, generation after generation, is perfectly clear and explicit. The oldest inhabitants of the parish, when asked for the burial ground of Ty Isaf, would invariably point out the grave under the yew-tree; and when asked where lay the body of Rhys Goch, would as consistently point out the grave in the southern portion of the churchyard.

The following incident will help us in estimating the value of tradition, and the tricky quotations of Glasynys. The late Rev. Wynn Williams, Menaifron, who was married to the oldest immediate descendant of Rhys Goch then living, supplied the facts. The last heiress of Hafod Garegog—Jane Wynn, wife of the Rev. Zaccheus Hughes of Trefan—expressed a wish, a little before she died, that she should be buried in the grave of her ancestor, Rhys Goch. In accordance with her wish, a grave was dug in the very spot pointed out by tradition as his burial place; but after digging down a few feet, a stone slab was discovered bearing the following inscription: "Yn rhodd gadëwch lonydd i hwn" ("Be good enough to let him rest undisturbed"). The wish expressed in the inscription was complied with, and Jane Wynn was buried in her father's grave, which lies between the porch and the yew-tree. A note of this incident was made at the time by her husband, the Rev Z. Hughes, which afterwards passed into the hands of Mrs. Wynn Williams.

West of the pathway, between the yew-tree and the porch, we find a tombstone lying flat on the ground. It bears the following very simple inscription: "John ab John, Dyed the 3rd Day of March 1699" Nothing is known of John ab John, but it has been conjectured that this was the John ab John who accompanied George Fox during his visit to Wales,

[1] See *Y Brython*, vol. ii. p. 220, and vol. iii. p. 153.

in the latter part of the Protectorate. The simplicity of the inscription is quite Quaker-like, and the silence of local tradition concerning him gives the suggestion some probability.

Some one has been tampering with some of the tombstones, for we find an attempt made to alter the inscriptions. In the case of one stone, ugly scratches have been made on it by a blunt chisel, and pieces of the surface have been knocked off. But in another case the graceless hand has achieved fair success. On the grave of the Wynns of Hafod Garegog, above referred to, we have the following words :—

Here lyeth the Body of Maurice Wynn, Esq., of
Hafod G'regog, who Died ye 2d day of March 1739,
in the 38th year of his Age.

Here also lyeth the Body of Grace Wynn, his wife,
who Died ye 26th Day of Jany., 1765,
In the 460th year of her Age.

The prefixed figure is comparatively recent, but quite in character with the other figures.

Most of the epitaphs are written in the vernacular, and in the form of *Englynion*—a style of verse peculiar to Welsh poetry. Some of them are written by well-known bards, and need no comment; others are passably to the purpose, while some have no merit; but most of them escape the bathos of the following examples of verses in the bastard English, of which, no doubt, the authors were proud.

David Prichard, late Goat Inn, in the Parish of Beddgelert, who departed this transitory life, etc.

Farewell, Wife and Children dear,
Weep not for me, for I sleep here,
For I sleep here in hope to rise
To live with you in paradise.

D : G : 1707. C : G : 1715.

I.H.S.

Underneath Lyeth ye Body of Alice Griffith, who Dyed August ye 17th, 1759, in the 28th year of her Age.

Thousand Fates on Death attends,
Which brings poor Mortals to their Ends.

On another tombstone we have that—

> Hers was a soul of fire that burned
> Too soon for us, its early tent,
> But not too soon for her, returned
> To Him from whom it first was sent :
> Grave, keep her ashes, till redeemed from thee
> This mortal put on immortality.

Here is another specimen :—

> Though on thy Tomb our tears must flow,
> 'Twas thy first care that we should know
> Him who hath wip'd away thy woe.
> My Mother.

If Welshmen were incapable of anything better than the above, it is quite certain that no Englishman would quarrel with them for clinging to their own tongue. It is difficult to know why they used such English, unless they were possessed with a fear that is not yet "cast out," that the second generation from their own would not be able to read Welsh.

Formerly the path to the meadows and Gelert's grave went through the churchyard, and one may still pick up an old *Guide-Book* which calls the tourists' attention to this path. It has long been closed up—since the extension of 1850, if we mistake not—and the path by the riverside has been made as a substitute.

CHAPTER X

NANT COLWYN

Its General Aspect.—Nant Colwyn runs north-west from Bedd Gelert to Rhyd-ddu, where it is split up into two branches by an angle of the parish of Llanwnda. One branch turns off to the west in the direction of Llanllyfni, and the other runs northward as far as Cwm Tre Weirydd, on Snowdon. It measures about five miles in length, and at the upper end

is about two miles wide. Thirty years ago its appearance was barren and rocky, having scarcely a tree to redeem its naked aspect. But by to-day the work of the planter has borne fruit, and the vale is filled with promise of a ligneous harvest at no far distant future. Nature has also taken heart, and has sent forth a comely growth of her own planting. Its slopes are evenly graduated, and, starting from the river which drives its melodious waters through the very middle of the vale, they rise up, and reach unhindered the highest mountain peaks. But we are told that even when its aspect was so naked and bare, it was by no means deficient in variety of views, which charmed the eye, and gratified the curiosity of the tourist. The green-coloured hill and the sodless rock, lying side by side, presented a delightful contrast; and the steel-like crags, frequently silvered over by the waters of the leaping rills, formed a magnificent contrast with the brownish tint of the scorched surface of the bogland.

About the beginning of April of last year, we had something like a phenomenon, as we journeyed up the road to Rhyd-ddu leaning on our cycles. The vale was somewhat suddenly filled with a thin mist, which had been driven into it from the mountains lying north-west of Snowdon, by a fairly strong wind. We were about five hundred yards nearer Bedd Gelert than Glan y Gors, when we thought we could see something like a gipsy tent on the hill-slope to our right. We imagined that we could see the smoke flying in all directions before the unsteady breezes, and were it not for the peculiarly inconvenient place at which we thought the tent had been fixed, we should have proceeded on our way doubting nothing of the nature of what we had seen. But as the slope was steep, and the place was right in the middle of private property, we hesitated, after a little reflection, and took out a small field opera-glass. What did we find but a huge dark rock instead of a tent, and the extremely fine spray of a tiny cascade instead of the smoke. The little rill, hurrying down from the hill above, leaped from the top of this dark rock on to the stones below, and the wind caught it before it fell and blew it about in specks as fine as

dewdrops, giving it the appearance of the smoke we imagined. The vale is frequently filled with optical delusions of this kind, though the summer tourist has little chance of seeing them.

In pointing out this vale's various matters of interest, the reader must picture us with our backs to the village of Bedd Gelert, and our faces towards Carnarvon.

Bedd Gwian.—After passing the vicarage we come to a lodge, in front of which passes a road leading to the farms of Cwm Cloch. After entering the gate, on which is nailed a ridiculous sign warning off trespassers, we come to a field called Llwyn Gwian. The name is taken from the little grove in its left-hand corner, which is again called after the mound at its upper end, by Cwm Cloch River. This mound is said to be the grave of a hero called Gwian, and is called Bedd Gwian (Gwian's Grave). We have no tradition of any kind to enable us to draw any inference as to his character or deeds. Gwian is historically and physically at rest.

Cwm Cloch.—Cwm Cloch is the name of the two slopes drained by the little brook which empties itself into the Colwyn, just above the vicarage. On one of these slopes are a group of out-houses, which represent all that remains of Cwm Cloch Uchaf farm. The dwelling-house has been turned into a cow-house.

In the first farm after we pass Bedd Gwian lives a simple and unassuming farmer, who is filled with the spirit of the antiquarian. He has a small collection of curios, the most interesting of which is, probably, a little stone which he found while digging the foundation of the bridge, which crosses the river a little below his house. It measures three inches by four, and has a hole through it, some inch or inch and a quarter from the top. Then it has lines engraved on its broadest surface, which shows its Druidic origin. Mr. Thomas has put a very interesting frame about it, on which he has carved "Cymraeg Lwys i'r Cymry Glan" (Pure Welsh for Pure Welshmen) in the characters of the "Alphabet of the Bards," and an explanation in Welsh, which in English may be rendered thus :—

A Stone of Testimony

Which was found in the earth whilst cutting the foundation of Cwm Cloch Bridge. February 25th, 1891.

It was found about seven feet from the surface, and is of the same material as the softer slate-stone of the neighbourhood.

Mr. Thomas has also the fourth part of an upper hand-mill stone, and another grit-stone with a flat and a rounded surface, which was probably used for rubbing the corn into a coarse meal. The latter has unfortunately been broken in two. These were found whilst making a stone fence below the house, along with heaps of other fragments of the same stone. A piece of crystal, a bunch of straw found some six feet below the surface of one of Cwm Cloch fields, a number of nuts similarly unearthed, an old clay pipe found on Gilfach Ddu, Hafod y Rhisgl, about four feet from the surface, together with an old silver coin, found about six years ago while digging a grave in Bedd Gelert churchyard, and on which the word *vita* is still visible—these form the remainder of his curios.

He very kindly took us along a lengthy portion of the old Roman bridle path, which can still be unmistakably traced through three or four of his fields. He is now busily unearthing the stumps of old oaks which have been buried on his fields for very many centuries, and we hope that he will carry out his project of turning them to good use. Some of them must be the stumps of the oaks so ruthlessly destroyed by Edward I. Mr. Thomas was for years the parish sexton.

A little higher up, on the opposite side of the brook, stand two attached farmhouses, in one of which lives Mr. David Prichard. He is a man of a literary turn of mind, and has distinguished himself in the parish by carrying away two prizes at local Eisteddfodau. One of the essays is on "The Old Dwelling Houses of the Parish," and the other on "The Characteristics of Some Religious People of the Parish." He has very generously allowed us the use of these essays, and

we gladly acknowledge that our materials have been enriched by his labours.

Moel Hebog Chimney.—Looking at Moel Hebog in a south-westerly direction from these farms, we see a dark and hideous precipice stretching almost to the very peak of the mountain. It is an exceedingly steep rock, and is called Simnai y Foel (The Chimney of Moel Hebog). The reader who has never seen it may have some idea of its steepness from the following anecdote. Not very many years ago, when fox hunting was a common excitement in the parish, a fox led the chase in the direction of the Chimney; and having become hard pressed by the hounds, Reynard struck for the precipice, and climbed up a good distance, until he could go no farther. The hounds were helpless, and the fox sat watching them, resting himself on a ledge of the rock. After a good deal of lamenting over their misfortune, the huntsmen sought some means of driving the fox from his place of security. One of the men volunteered to climb to the ledge and drive him down. After some anxious climbing, he reached a ledge near the one on which Reynard rested, and suddenly reaching out for him, hurled him from his resting-place. The poor creature reached the bottom in fragments, which the dogs soon devoured. The man is still spoken of as one of the heroes of his day; for no man after the days of Owen Glyndwr had ever been known to climb even a part of it.

Owen Glyndwr's Feat.—It is said that when fortune had for a time deserted Owen Glyndwr, he fled to his warm-hearted friend and supporter, Rhys Goch, of Hafod Garegog, for refuge and shelter. Here he abode for a short time in safety; but before long his enemies got trace of him again. One day a batch of men, belonging to a squire hostile to Owen, came to Hafod Garegog to seize him, with the intention of handing him over to the king. They were seen in time by one of Rhys Goch's men, and he hastened to the house to warn Owen and Rhys of their danger. They both dressed themselves in the men-servants' clothes and fled, Rhys taking the direction of Nanmor, and Owen making for the beach.

The enemy caught sight of Owen, and seeing that he was secretly making his escape, they pursued him. When he saw that they were after him, he threw himself headlong into the water, and, though the tide was then high, swam safely to shore close by Dinas Ddu. He made his way up along Cwm Oerddwr, fixing his eye on Moel Hebog, being closely pressed by his pursuers. When he had ascended the hillside until close by Moel Hebog, he found himself in the greatest straits. Before him stood the *Simnai*, close behind him panted his pursuers, and only the common ascent on his left was clear. To climb that would be like courting capture, as his pursuers would be sure to overtake him. What could he do? He looked up the steep rock, and thought that if he could only climb it he would get the lead of them; but it was steep, bare, and stepless, and should he once miss his hold, there was nothing but instantaneous death before him. Like the hero that he was, he made a dash for the rock, and immediately began to climb the Chimney; his daring and determination conquered his difficulty, and soon his enemies could see him mounting the peak in safety. Not one of them would follow in this venture, so that they had to go round the easier path.

In the meantime Owen made his way, unperceived by them, along the ridge of Diffwys, and descended over the brow of that appalling precipice to a large cave-like cleft, where he remained concealed for six months. His pursuers pressed on to Pennant, thinking that he had taken that direction, and thus completely lost every trace of him. During his concealment in this cleft, called ever since "Ogof Owain Glyndwr," the Prior of Bedd Gelert provided for all his immediate wants. Rhys Goch is said to have gone on as far as Nant y Benglog, and to have remained concealed for a time in a place called to this day "Twll Rhys Goch" (The Cavern of Rhys Goch), where one Meredydd ab Ifan fed him.

History tells us that Owen Glyndwr, after meeting with a succession of reverses in 1403, went into concealment for a time. Several places claim the honour of having extended its protection to him in that brief perplexity. Among others we have Llangelynin in Merionethshire. There is in that parish

a cave called "Ogof Owain," where he is said to have taken refuge under the protection of one Ednyfed ab Caron. It seems that his greatest friends knew nothing of his whereabouts at the time. Iolo Goch thought that he had gone to Rome :—

> Come, show thy shield from Rome afar,
> Leave sound of bells for noise of war—

or to the East :—

> From Eastern lands hasten, warrior dread,
> Stone walls shall tremble at thy tread.

Llewelyn ab Owen thought the same :—

> The mottled star in heav'n still rides,
> Not fall'n is he—he calmly hides :
> When he, the tyrant's doom, comes home,
> Know he shall come from far-off Rome.

But Robin Ddu of Hiraddug seems to have had some idea of Owen's place of concealment, as the following words show :—

> The eagle's fledgling, to my mind,
> We shall on yonder Snowdon find ;
> When he ungloves the avenger's hand,
> It shall be heard of through this land.
> ELVET, *trans.*

Cwm Diffwys.—The hollow below the Diffwys is closed in by an arm stretching out from Moel Hebog, and another arm called Braich Meillionen. As the first arm has no name known to the inhabitants, we are tempted to call it "Braich Ogof Owain." Cwm Diffwys is the name which we had for the hollow. In this cwm are two things of interest. When we visited the place at the beginning of May last it was filled with an exceedingly thin mist, which, together with an occasional bleat by a stray sheep, and the clear sound of the waters of a tiny rill below us, gave one a weird sensation. It suggested an ideal home for a hermit.

Not far from where the water, forming the rill, first oozes out from the rock, we may find a little pool called Ffynon Owain Glyndwr (The Well of O.G.), where the fugitive Owen is said to have gone for water day after day during the six

months of concealment. At the lower end of this same hollow are several ruins, called "Cytiau'r Gwyddelod." We are not sure of the correct explanation of these remains. *Gwyddelod* is the Welsh plural form of Gwyddel (Irishman) and sometimes these are called "Irishmen's Huts." There is a tradition, as we pointed out before, that the Irish were once the occupiers of this part of the country, and that these are remains of their colonies. Another explanation is that mentioned by Pennant,[1] "the cottages of the wood-rangers, a sort of temporary hovels erected for the purposes of hunting by our remotest ancestors." The other explanation, which is suggested by the origin of the Welsh term for a native of Ireland, seems as plausible as any. They seem like the first attempts of our very remote ancestors at making stone buildings, especially for habitation during times of war. They are almost invariably built on mountain sides, where they would have thick forests between them and the bridle paths below, along which the enemy might come at any moment.

These ruins vary in size. Most of them measure about twelve feet in diameter, but there is a faint trace of one measuring thirty-six feet. Each of these is circular in shape, and would lead us to think that they were at first about six feet high. There is also one square building measuring about eighteen feet by ten; but this bears the marks of a much later date.

Hafod Ernallt.—After descending from Cwm Diffwys to the wall of the plantation, the reader should keep to the left until he comes to the middle of the slope of Braich Meillionen; then, if he has anything of the spirit of the mountain in him, he will cross over the plantation wall, and descend some twenty or thirty yards, when he will spy an old ruin. This is the noted old ruin of Hafod Ernallt. On the south side of the ruin was a large court, neatly laid out with square minor buildings. The Hafod itself was divided into three chambers, two of which were of the same size, the third being about half their size. The first room, next to the outer court, had the only entrance belonging to the house. It was a room

[1] Vol. ii. p. 288 (1810).

measuring twenty one feet by fifteen. The second room was entered from the first, and measured the same as the first, only that the length of the second was across the width of the first. The other had its length in the same direction as the first, and measured ten feet by six. This third room was perfectly dark, having neither door nor window, and was only

Ruins of Hafod Ernallt.

entered by a small hole of some twenty-seven inches from the second room. For a ruin, it is in a fair state of preservation, and as much as six feet of the walls on the lower side are still standing.

If asked as to its antiquity, we should have no hesitation in pronouncing a strong opinion that it is as old as the Tudor period, at least. In fact, there is a strong probability that it belongs to a period even older than that. The dark room represents either a place of concealment for refugees in the time of revolt, or a place of meditation for the ascetic satellites of the Priory.

Hafod Ernallt and Hidden Money.—A very strange story is

related by people who heard it from the good old people of a generation or two ago, and which they vouched to be "as true as Gospel." They said that some one hundred and twenty years ago the tenancy of Meillionen was held by two lonely old bachelors from Lleyn. They were two genial and light-hearted old cronies, living as happily on their humble hearth as a king in his gorgeous palace. One winter's evening, soon after twilight, they and their servants were sitting round a large bright peat fire, in the big old kitchen of Meillionen, and chatting merrily. Suddenly their chatting and story-telling were disturbed by a knock at the door, and the loud barking of the dogs. When the dogs had been silenced and the door opened, a stranger entered the house, and saluted the master of the house with the words, "May God's blessing rest on this house," after the courteous manner of the good old folks of long ago.

The stranger received a cordial welcome, and was asked to sit down before a good supply of food and drink, which was immediately brought before him. While he was busily doing justice to this, the family went on chatting, starting from where they had left off. The stranger, however, took no notice of the conversation, but looked sad and abstracted, as if something great was weighing on his mind. When bedtime came he asked if he might speak to the old bachelors alone, "because," said he, "if I do not get an opportunity of making known my message, it will be impossible for me to sleep a wink to-night." His request was granted him, and he told them his trouble. He said that he was a man from Anglesey, and that he had been sorely troubled for several years with strange dreams, concerning a pitcherful of "buried money" which was concealed in a certain old ruin. A spirit used to appear to him in his dream, earnestly praying him to follow him as far as the ruin, and promising that he and his family would get enough to live on for life. All he was asked to do was to follow the spirit.

The man was then asked whether he knew where the ruin was, and the name by which it was called. He replied that he did, as the spirit had explained all that to him. He said

that its name was Hafod Ernallt, on the land of Meillionen, and that the treasure was hidden under a stone in a particular corner. One of the old bachelors then asked him whether he would know the place if he saw it. The man replied that he would. "Ho!" said the old fellow, "I am glad of that, because I do not know of any old ruin of that name on this land; we will search for it in the morning. But, by the way, are you sure that you have caught the exact name, because there is a very remarkable old ruin on the land of a farm called Meillion*ydd* in Lleyn"; and he then described Hafod Ernallt to him, as the supposed ruin of Meillionydd. This threw the man into perplexity and doubt, and at cock-crow the next morning he was led over Bwlch Cwm Trwsgwl, and shown the way to Lleyn, in search of Meillionydd. As soon as he was gone the old bachelors set out for Hafod Ernallt, and after a little search came across the right stone. On lifting it up they found the pitcher, just as the man had described, and its contents weighed sixty pounds of gold and silver. Along with the pitcher was found a rare old shield.

As Meillionydd is a farm not far from Aberdaron, the old bachelors had plenty of time to do their work in comfort. On the third day the man returned from Lleyn, greatly disappointed in his search for the ruin; but in taking the path over Bwlch Meillionen and Braich Meillion, he suddenly discovered Hafod Ernallt just below him. He made straight down for it, and searched for the stone and found it. After lifting it up he perceived, to his utter dismay, that the treasure had been taken away. What the stranger did afterwards we are not told, but it is certain that the old bachelors became very rich all of a sudden. One of them soon afterwards got married, and his descendants are to this day among the well-to-do of the country.

A Curious Shield.—"Opposite to *Bedd Kelert*," says Pennant,[1] "is *Moel Hebog*. In a bog not far from that mountain was found, in 1784, a most curious brass shield, which Mr. Williams of *Llanidan* favoured me with a sight of. Its diameter was two feet two inches, the weight four pounds.

[1] Vol. ii. p. 362 (ed. 1810).

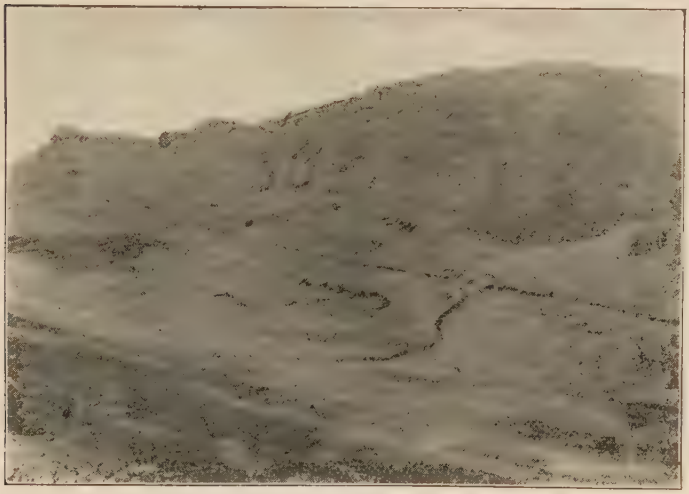
In the centre was a plain umbo, projecting above two inches. The surface of the shield was marked with twenty-seven smooth concentric circles, and between each a depressed space, of the same breadth with the elevated parts, marked by a single row of smooth studs. The whole shield was flat and very limber. I cannot attribute this to the *Welsh*, who seemed to despise every species of defensive armour." "In a bog not far from that mountain" was conveniently indefinite for Pennant, as well as for the custodian of the shield. The story related above gives the very spot where it was discovered, and the reader will not be far wrong if he inserts a marginal note on his Pennant's *Tours*.

Cwm Meillionen.—This cwm runs in a south-west direction, and is nearly filled up at its lower end with a thriving plantation of fir-trees. On a slope of this cwm, or mountain valley, close by the river, can be seen a small old ruin, around which are traces of a wall which had a radius of a stone's throw. We do not happen to know of a single house of the kind in this parish except this. It reminds one of an old custom which was common on open mountains in some parts of Wales. If a man could build a house of turf in one day and one night, and light a fire in it by the following morning, he could claim it as his own. After living in it for a year and a day, he could build a house of stone around it of any size he pleased, and could also claim a piece of land of the radius of a hatchet's throw around his property, which was to be considered for ever afterwards his own.

At the upper end of the cwm, right under a perpendicular rock, stands another old ruin, similar to that of Hafod Ernallt, only not so elaborate nor so old. A part of the ruin is formed by a tremendous boulder, which has broken loose at some time or other, from the rock above. A very large stone rests a little south-east of this ruin, on the top of which grows some green vegetation, the nature of which we did not particularly observe, but which gives to the stone a peculiar appearance from a certain point of view. We approached it from its south side, and were irresistibly reminded of a bird sitting in a half-sleeping mood. The vegetation seemed like a short tuft of

fine feathers, and a point of the stone looked exactly like a bird's beak.

Ogof Elen.—There is no spot about which the majority of the inhabitants of the parish show more ignorance or confusion than Ogof Elen. Nearly every one whom you may ask will plead ignorance or guess wrongly. The steep rock at the top of Cwm Meillionen is called "Moel yr Ogof" (The Mountain



Moel yr Ogof and Elen's Cave.

of the Cave), and most people think that the yawning line across it is the cave of Owen Glyndwr. But the full name of the mountain is "Moel Ogof Elen," and Elen's Cave is not the opening running across its brow, but the opening in the dent of the rock. Gently oozing water trickles down the stones from it, and keeps its steep approach for ever green. We climbed within ten yards of its mouth, and had begun the climb with the intention of entering it. As the ascent was slippery, and as neither of us had ever been members of "The Club for Promoting Widowhood," otherwise known as the "Alpine Club," we played cowards and retreated.

This is the cave in which Ieuan ap Robert (or John, the son of Robert), of Gesail Gyfarch, used to conceal himself during the times of the wars of York and Lancaster. Ieuan ap Robert ap Meredydd, as he was usually called, was a great warrior, and a warm supporter of the Lancastrians. He and David ap Jenkin, together with other captains of the Lancastrian party, furiously attacked with fire and sword the territory of the Yorkists in the suburbs of the town of Denbigh. Then Edward IV., in 1468, sent a powerful army under Will Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, to wreak vengeance on the raiders. Herbert pushed his way up the Vale of Conway as far as Dolwyddelen, wasting and burning all before him. Some "learned Divine, well known in the literary world for several publications," has rendered an *englyn* commemorating the event into the following quaint verse in English :—

In Harddlech and Dinbech ev'ry house
Was basely set on fire,
But poor Nant Conway suffer'd more,
For there the flames burnt higher;
'Twas in the year of our LORD
Fourteen hundred sixty-eight
That these unhappy towns of Wales
Met with such wretched fate.[1]

The castle of Harlech was held at this time by David ab Evan ab Einion for "the two Earles, Henry of Richmond and Jasper of Pembroke." Herbert passed on from Dolwyddelen through Festiniog as far as Harlech, and there laid siege to the castle, summoning David to surrender the place to him without delay. David sent back the reply that he had held out a castle in France until all the old women in Wales talked of him, and that he would defend his Welsh castle until all the old women in France should hear of it. While Herbert was besieging Harlech, Ieuan ap Robert was incessantly attacking his scouts and skirmishers in the neighbourhood of Nant Gwynen; and as it was not safe for him to sleep in his own house, Gesail Gyfarch, near Penmorfa, he used to sleep every night in this cave.

[1] *History of the Gwydr Family*, pp. 54, 55.

A little way north of this cave is Bwlch y Saeson, through which the soldiers of Edward I. made their way into the district in the time of David ap Griffith.

Meillionen and Ty'n y Coed.—In descending from Cwm Meillionen to Bedd Gelert the simplest way is to make for Meillionen farm, where a path will be pointed out leading past Ty'n y Coed to the main road. In a field, some five hundred yards above Meillionen, we find the ruins of an old building of large dimensions, but we have been unable to get any information whatever concerning it. It is not unlike a farm labourer's cottage, around which was built a couple of out-houses belonging to the farm. Meillionen was once an old mansion belonging to a well-to-do family, and the house has always been considered one of the landmarks of the parish. The present building, as it stands, is not old, though parts of the old house are still to be seen in its northern end. The huge stones with which its walls are built should be noticed by all who are interested in masonry; and the aged building, now used as a cow-house, should not be passed by unnoticed, though it has nothing but its antiquity to attract attention.

The path from Meillionen to the road leads through the yard of an old cottage, that belonged to Meillionen, and which was called Ty'n y Coed. A new house has now been built close by it, and since the old cottage now only shelters cattle, it has had to surrender its name to the new homestead. The most notable thing about this house is that it served as one of the earliest homes of Calvinistic Methodism in the parish. Owing to unpleasant circumstances, the undeveloped Church of this body found itself without a home about the middle of the last decade but one of the last century. A short time previous to this Meillionen had become the home of a retired solicitor from Anglesey, whose name was Mr. Hughes. He and his devoted wife had identified themselves with this youthful sect before removing to the district, and when the cause became homeless, Mrs. Hughes offered to arrange Ty'n y Coed for a meeting-place. As it was unoccupied at the time, the offer was gladly accepted. The feeling against these "Roundheads," as they were called, ran very high, but the

fears of a solicitor came upon the persecutors, and they dare not do open violence. So that Mr. and Mrs. Hughes proved of great service to "the fanatics."

At the bottom of the field, below this old building, runs the river Colwyn, across which an iron foot-bridge is stretched for the convenience of these two families. Before this bridge was made, the river had to be crossed by a narrow wooden bridge, and the following incident is connected with one such structure in the days when services were being held at Ty'n y Coed. The week-night church meeting was being held there one evening, and, when it was over, most of those present walked quietly homeward along the path which led over this bridge. When nearing the bridge Richard Thomas, one of the deacons, felt something warning him against crossing the bridge, and he persuaded all the others not to cross it, but to go lower down and cross over by the river-stones. By the next morning it was found that some villain had sawn the plank or beam nearly through, on its lower side, and that had these harmless and innocent people not followed the secret warning they had got, most of them would have been either killed or drowned. The place is exceedingly steep and narrow, and the pool below is very deep, and no one who has ever seen the spot can ever think of this murderous attempt without a shudder.

A Roman Road.—Several portions of the well-known Roman road which connected Segontium (by Carnarvon) and Heriri Mons (near Trawsfynydd) can still be seen in this parish. It ran from Carnarvon through Waen Fawr, and then followed the river Gwyrfai, on its eastern side, as far as Melin y Rhyd, in the vale of Bettws Garmon, where it crossed over to the western side of the river. It then passed right underneath Castell Cidwm, climbed up Gallt y Llyn (the slope above Cawellyn), where it can still be seen, and passed west of Llyn y Gadair, over the hill called Y Gadair, to Glan y Gors. We have no trace of it again until we pass Meillionen, and then it comes to view above Ty'n y Coed, whence it can be followed until within a field of Cwm Cloch. It can scarcely be doubted that the portion obliterated made straight for the front of the

place where now stands the Royal Goat Hotel. From here it followed the same course as the present road, until near the old engine-house—now used as a hay shed—on the right-hand side of the road. It then crossed over Bryn y Felin, passing through a cutting in the rock by a little tower, and crossing over the very mouth of an old copper level, to emerge once more into the main road, about ten yards south of the third telegraph post from the old stamping houses on the roadside. We know nothing definite of its course again until we are right in the Pass. Some think that parts of it can be traced on the rocks above the road. A part of the embankment approaching the old bridge of the pass is still visible. About a dozen or eighteen slender fir-trees grow on it, drawing their moisture from the impatient stream that hurries by. Some five yards beyond the Aberglaslyn Bridge, on the Nanmor side, we see an old cutting above the road, on our left, which marks out its further course; and here we shall leave it at present.

There are several branches of these Roman bridle paths in this parish, and we shall notice them in their separate districts; but it may be as well to consider the question of their name, as designated by the Welsh people, here. The name given to them is "Ffyrdd Elen" (Elen's Roads), which some consider to be a name given to roads of a particular kind, and others believe to be the names of roads made by the Romans, which varied considerably; but both ascribe them to the time of a powerful female warrior called Elen. There is one such character in Welsh traditional history, and she is called Elen Lueddog (the warlike), or Elen Lwyddog (the victorious).

The Legend of Elen Lueddog.—Who was this warlike Elen, the constructor of roads and causeways? Two opinions are expressed in answer to this question. One opinion is that she was the mother of Constantine the Great, and that she superintended the construction of these roads during her efforts in levying soldiers to assist her son in his conquest of the East. The other is that she was Elen, the daughter of Eudav of Segontium, and the wife of Maxen Wledig, and "the heroine

of an old Welsh saga known as the Dream of Maxen Wledig." Principal Rhys, in his *Hibbert Lectures* (p. 162), gives the following extract of it:—

"Maxen was Emperor of Rome, and the handsomest of men, as well as the wisest, with whom none of his predecessors might compare. One day he and his courtiers went forth to hunt, and in the course of the day he sat himself down to rest, while his chamberlains protected him from the scorching rays of the sun with their shields. Beneath that shelter he slept, and he dreamt that he was travelling over hill and dale, across rich lands and fine countries, until at length he reached a sea-coast. Then he crossed the sea in a magnificent ship, and landed in a great city in an island, which he traversed from one shore till he was in sight of the other. There we find him in a district remarkable for its precipitous mountains and lofty cliffs, from which he could descry an isle in front of him, surrounded by the sea. He stayed not in his course until he reached the mouth of a river, where he found a castle with open gates. He walked in, and there beheld a fair hall, built of stones precious and brilliant, and roofed with shingles of gold. To pass by a great deal more of gold and silver and other precious things, Maxen found in the hall four persons, namely, two youths playing at chess. They were the sons of the lord of the castle, who was a venerable, gray-haired man, sitting in an ivory chair adorned with the images of two eagles of ruddy gold. He had bracelets of gold on his arms, and many a ring glittered on his fingers; a massive gold torque adorned his neck, while a frontlet of the same precious metal served to restrain his locks. Hard by sat his daughter, in a chair of ruddy gold, and her beauty was so transcendent, that it would be no more easy to look at her face than to gaze at the sun when his rays are most irresistible. She was clad in white silk, fastened on her breast with brooches of ruddy gold, and over it she wore a surcoat of golden satin, while her head was adorned with a golden frontlet set with rubies and gems, alternating with pearls and imperial stones. The narrator closes his description of the damsel by giving her a girdle of gold and by declaring her altogether the fairest of

the race. She rose to meet Maxen, who embraced her and sat with her in her chair.

"At this point the dream was suddenly broken off by the restlessness of the horses and the hounds, and the creaking of the shields rubbing against each other, which woke the Emperor a bewildered man. Reluctantly and sadly he moved, at the advice of his men, towards home, for he could think of nothing but the fair maiden in gold. In fact, there was no joint in his body, or even as much as the hollow of one of his nails, which had not become charged with her love. When his courtiers sat at table to eat or drink, he would not join them; and when they went to hear song and entertainment, he would not go, or, in a word, do anything for a whole week but sleep as often as the maiden slept, whom he beheld in his dreams. When he was awake she was not present to him, nor had he any idea where in the world she was. This went on until at last one of his nobles contrived to let him know, that his conduct in neglecting his men and his duties was the cause of growing discontent. Thereupon he summoned before him the wise men of Rome and told them the state of mind in which he was. Their advice was that messengers should be sent on a three years' quest to the three parts of the world, as they calculated that the expectation of good news would help to sustain him. But at the end of the first year the messengers returned unsuccessful, which made Maxen sad; so other messengers were sent forth to search another third of the world. They returned at the end of their year, like the other, unsuccessful. Maxen, now in despair, took the advice of one of his courtiers, and resorted to the forest where he had first dreamt of the maiden. When the glade was reached he was able to give his messengers a start in the right direction. They went on and on, identifying the country they traversed with the Emperor's description of his march day by day, until at last they reached the rugged district of Snowdon, and beheld Mona lying in front of them flat in the sea. They proceeded a little farther and entered a castle, where Carnarvon now stands, and there beheld the hall roofed with gold. They walked in, and found Kynan and Adeon playing at

chess, while their father Eudav, son of Karadawg, sat in his chair of ivory, with his daughter Elen seated near him. They saluted her as Empress of Rome, and proceeded to explain the meaning of an act she deemed so strange. She listened courteously, but declined to go with them, thinking it more appropriate that the Emperor should come in person to fetch her.

"In due time he reached Britain, which he conquered from Beli the Great and his sons. Then he proceeded to visit Elen and her father, and it was during his stay here, after the marriage, that Elen had Carmarthen built and the stronghold in Eryri. The story adds Caerleon to them, but distinguishes *the unnamed Snowdon city* as the favourite abode of her and her husband. The next thing she undertook was to employ the hosts at her command in *the construction of roads* between the three towns, which she had caused to be built in part payment of her maiden-fee. But Maxen remained here so many years that the Romans made an Emperor in his stead. So at length he and Elen, and her two brothers and their hosts, set out for Rome, which they had to besiege and take by storm. Maxen was now reinstated in power, and he allowed his brothers-in-law and their hosts to settle wherever they chose; so Adeon and his men came back to Britain, while Kynan and his reduced Brittany, and settled there."

The italics are ours, and are inserted on account of their direct connection with this parish. The narrator of the above summarised romance distinctly mentions that the roads spoken of in the story were called the roads of Elen Lueddog, because it was she who ordered their construction. Another legend, connected with this same Elen, will be given in another chapter.

CHAPTER XI

NANT COLWYN (*continued*)

A Safe Retreat.—On the left of the main road, opposite a small grove, stands Hafod Ruffydd; and some two fields nearer the mountain is Hafod Ruffydd Ucha'. The latter has not long since been turned into a farmhouse, receiving as its appurtenance some of the land long farmed by Meillionen. The former has undergone a little change. Its old dwelling-house has been turned into an out-house, and one of the old out-houses has been used up in the rebuilding of the present dwelling-house. One of our poets has perpetuated the memory of a sad event which clouded this home about the beginning of this century. The wife, who was a skilful nurse, had been called to a neighbouring farm to attend to a case of emergency. The river of Hafod Ruffydd, which flows from a little tarn among the trees above, called Llyn Llewelyn, had risen very high, and she knew that she could only cross it with difficulty. In her eagerness to reach the place of duty, she made the attempt, and was carried away with a rush by the stream, and drowned. Such characters should be numbered among our heroines.

There is a good-sized piece of land lying between the river of Hafod Ruffydd and the Colwyn, and containing Glan y Gors. The inhabitants of this parish used to look at this spot as a kind of paradise for a man in adversity. It was said to belong to no diocese, and so was beyond the reach of the law. Any property deposited here was safe, and the canny old people of days gone by used to carry their possessions to this place for safety whenever their affairs went awry. We hardly need say that the law has found its way into this enchanting spot, and that now most of its charm is gone.

Only one family now lives at Glan y Gors; there used to be three. One of these homesteads has fallen in, and the

other has been turned into an out-house. During the early years of this century there lived here a man of the name of Evan Thomas *bach* (little), who was so called to distinguish him from a much *smaller* neighbour of the same name, who was called Evan Thomas *mawr* (big). Though *bach* and *mawr* generally mean simply *little* and *big* respectively, they are most frequently used of men in the sense of *junior* and *senior*; but these men were in no way related. Evan Thomas bach was a bit of a wag, and it is said that he went one day to Hafod Ruffydd, and complained that his old woman could not for the life of her bake bread, though she had done all she possibly could. The good woman of Hafod Ruffydd at once concluded that she was poorly, and sent her servant to bake for her. When the girl got to Glan y Gors, she found the old woman as well as ever, and, in her astonishment, told Sian her message. The old woman smiled, and said that her old man was quite right; she really could not bake that day. "Well," said the girl, "I will bake for you. Where is the flour?" "Ah, yes," she replied, "that is just it; it is the flour I haven't got." The girl went away disgusted with the joke, but the old woman found herself able to bake that day nevertheless.

Llam Trwsgwl Contest.—A little way beyond Glan y Gors, on a rock by the roadside, are the words *Llam Trwsgwl*. This spot is said to have been the scene of a keen contest between two giants. Their names are not preserved, but it is said that one challenged the other for a contest at jumping a long distance from some elevated spot. This place was selected for the scene, each one to jump from the edge of the rock. One of them succeeded in jumping right over the Colwyn, alighting on the edge of the rock on the river's brink. It is a jump of some seventy-five feet, and there remains to this day the mark of his huge foot on the rock above the river.

There is no certainty as to the exact form of the adjective to be used after *Llam* (a leap); some insist upon the form *trwsgl* (colloquially *trwsgwl*, awkward or clumsy), and others are equally certain that it ought to be *trosgol*, an abbreviation of *tros Golwyn* (over the Colwyn). A few feet higher up than the

footmark the river Colwyn has cut a narrow rift in the rock, which is not more than three or four feet wide, and then falls noisily down into a deep dark pool. In years gone by, when there was no bridge on the Colwyn between the wooden bridge of Ty'n y Coed and Nant yr Aran, the common footpath crossed the river at this rift. This spot is named, from this very circumstance, "Llam tros Golwyn" (the leap over Colwyn), from which words we have the abbreviation *Llam Trosgol*. Others maintain that it should be *Llam Trwsgwl*, and give the following story as a proof of their assertion.

The Tragedy and Ghost of Llam Trwsgwl.—A recently-built farmhouse stands on the left-hand side of the road, which is called Hafod Wydr; the name has been transferred to this house from an old house on the right-hand side of the road, which is now only an out-house. In this old house there lived a family many years ago, whose daughter kept company with a young man from Pennant. She was a fine-looking young woman, of a modest disposition and transparent character. The young couple had kept company so long that they felt quite prepared to enter upon life together, and the wedding-day was fixed. But some time during the interval between the day of fixing the date of the great event, and the wedding-day itself, the passionate young fellow fell deeply in love with another young woman, from his own neighbourhood. Though fully alive to his sacred obligations to the young woman from the Vale of Colwyn, he could not disentangle himself from the fascinations of the other, do what he would. He at last made up his mind that he would not marry his betrothed, but the difficulty was to free himself from his promise of marriage. If he refused to come up to his promises, the brothers and kin of the maiden would be sure to avenge her wrong, because either the sword or the club always paid off old scores in those days.

He after a time found that there was only one way out of the difficulty, and he determined to take it. On the afternoon preceding his wedding-day he betook himself as far as the home of his intended, seemingly full of good spirits and affection, and loaded with the gifts of friends for the *neithior*—the

wedding feast peculiar to Welsh customs. At dusk he began

Llam Trwsgwl.

to prepare himself for his return journey home, and his fond intended innocently went to send him a little way along the

path that crossed the Colwyn at this place. Here he would have her cross over with him, and she guilelessly and playfully joined hands with him, so as to leap it together. But, when she was in the act of taking the leap, he gave her a push right into the dark rumbling pool below, and then ran away. The river at the time was flooded, and as the rocks on each side were high and steep she had no room to struggle, even if she were not too stunned to do so, and so she was drowned. How her murderer fared we are not told.

The old people used to say that at a certain hour of the night in former times shrill cries and heartrending moans could be heard in this pool. Some have even seen wheels of blazing fire rolling down from Pwll Coch to this pool. Others have seen a beautiful young woman rising out of the pool half naked, her dripping hair hanging down her white shoulders, and standing by the *Llam* moaning bitterly. Others again have seen a stately maid walking about this spot, clad in rustling silk, and saying not a word to any one.

In this way *Bwgan Pen Pwll Coch* appeared to the good old people of this district for generations, and troubled them so sorely that farmers, in returning from Carnarvon market, would wait for one another at the tavern of Bettws Garmon, for fear that their animals and beasts of burden would not pass the place alone. Fortunately for the present generation, a stout-hearted old Christian from Nanmor made bold to speak to the ghost in the early years of this century, when it revealed the whole story; and since then the Hobgoblin of Pwll Coch has neither been seen nor heard by any one. The pool is called to this day "Llyn Nad y Forwyn" (the Pool of the Shrill Cries of the Maiden).

Caer y Gors.—Caer y Gors is a farm on the right-hand side of the road, about a quarter of a mile or more from Llam Trwsgwl. It was once two farms, and is generally known in the parish as Cae'r Gors. Cae'r Gors means "the field of the bog," but Caer y Gors means "the fort of the bog." Tradition speaks of a fortress which stood on the highest point of the hill, now turned into a plantation, which is on the left-hand side of the road, and a little way from it. This hill is called

"Y Gadair" (the Chair), and the lake immediately beyond it has received its name from it—Llyn y Gadair. Edward Llwyd, the learned antiquary of Oxford, was of opinion that "Caer" was only an abbreviation from "Cadair." If so, and it is likely enough, we have here the Welsh word for fortress in its unabbreviated form. As the old Roman road passed this way, it is quite probable that this fort guarded this portion of it. It is only natural to conclude that the farmhouse of Caer y Gors perpetuates the name of this British fortress.

Very many children reared in this place have risen to positions of honour and usefulness in the world. One family distinguished itself by sending into the world a number of well-known physicians. An excellent old deacon with the Calvinistic Methodists, by the name of Richard Roberts, lived here for very many years. A story is related of a prayer meeting held in this house in his time, that shows the inherent love of propriety, which is so characteristic of the inhabitants of this parish. The various houses of the parish used to take the prayer meeting in turns, and one night, when the turn of Caer y Gors came round, they happened to have a friend staying with them, and the leader asked him to take part, which he did. His prayer was so full of commands, and his tone so imperative, that one of the old characters present at the meeting said after coming out, "Do you know what, lads? If I were the Almighty, I would choke that fellow for ordering me about in that fashion."

Ceryg Collwyn, or Pitt's Head.—A heap of stones standing about fifty yards from the gate that leads up to the farm of Ffridd Ucha', on the left-hand side of the road, is called in Welsh "Ceryg Collwyn," and in English "Pitt's Head." The latter name has been given to it by English-speaking tourists, who, in looking at it from the Carnarvon side, see something in its outline like the profile of the great statesman Pitt. The heap is of artificial construction, and was probably erected, about the ninth century, in honour of the Welsh chief Collwyn, who was the head of one of the fifteen tribes of Wales, and who was lord of Eifionydd, Ardudwy, and part of Lleyn. It is quite probable that this vale, in the middle of which stands

this pile, is called after his name—in fact, there can be little doubt of it. By a simple change, which might have been effected through an inarticulate pronunciation of Collwyn, they have been called by many "Ceryg Hyllion" (literally "Hideous Stones"), which is by no means an unsuitable term for them, especially when we remember that the adjective *hyllion* means *spectral*. This name "Ceryg Hyllion" is still preserved in the name of the cow-house which is close by—Beudy Ceryg Hyllion. This proves that the wonderful resemblance of the heap to the profile of a human being is not a late discovery.

The Land of the Fairies.—We cannot proceed farther without pointing out the "Land of the Fairies," which forms an extensive part of this vale. It reaches from Cwm Hafod Ruffydd along the slope of Drws y Coed mountain, as far as Llyn y Dywarchen. This district, according to the old people of days gone by, was full of fairies, to whose charming music, nimble dancing, and mirthful sports, they used to listen every moonlight night.

Fairies were not all of the same species, but were almost invariably associated with hilly districts. They varied according to the districts to which they belonged, just as human beings differ according to the difference of the surroundings amid which they have been reared. In some districts the fairies are described as diminutive beings with strong thieving propensities, who used to live in summer among the bracken on the mountains, and in winter among the heather and gorse. These used to frequent fairs, and steal the farmers' money from their pockets, placing in their stead the coins of the fairies, which counterfeited the ordinary money; but when they were paid for anything that had been bought, they would vanish in the seller's pocket. In other districts they were described as somewhat bigger and stronger people; but these were also of a thieving disposition, and would lurk about people's houses, watching their opportunity to steal the butter and cheese from the dairy. They would also loiter about the cow yards, and would sometimes milk the cows and goats so dry that there would be no milk whatever left for many a morning. But the greatest sport this species had was in stealing un

christened babies and placing their own puny and peevish offspring in their place. These are said to dwell in the secret caves of mountains, and one old man used to assert that he was quite sure that the fairies of Nant y Bettws lived under Moel Eilio, that he had seen them heaps of times when a lad, and that if any one could come across the mouth of their cave he would find an immense amount of wealth, "for they were incomparable thieves."

There is still another species of fairies, very unlike the foregoing in disposition and nature. Not only did they far surpass them in beauty and comeliness, but they also treated mortals with honesty and kindness. Their whole nature was brimful of joy and merriment; they were hardly ever seen except at some harmless fun. They could be seen on clear moonlight nights singing and carolling lightheartedly on the fair meadows and green hill-slopes, or tripping lightly on the tips of the bulrushes, as they danced in the valleys; and they could be seen following vigorously in the hunt on their gray horses, for this species was truly opulent, having servants and horses of the finest sorts.

Though they were said to be spiritual and immortal beings, they nevertheless ate and drank, married and begat children, just like human beings. They were also exceedingly fond of cleanliness, and were accustomed to reward tidy servant girls and hospitable women. They would visit the clean houses during the night, and would leave money for the girls; but should one of them tell any one of this, the fairies would take offence and cease coming. The wives used to get a tin of clean water placed at the foot of the staircase, a clean cloth laid on the table, with eatables thereon, so that if the fairies entered and partook of it, they would get their praise and reward on the hob next morning.

It seems that the places most commonly frequented by this species were rushy valleys, or *cymoedd*, surrounded by grassy hills, and the brinks of rivers and lakes. They were but seldom seen near rocks or cliffs, so that more folk-lore is found concerning them in such districts than in any other. These are also said to have lived under the earth, and the

ways leading to their country lay under hollow banks overhanging the deepest parts of the lakes, or the deepest pools of rivers, so that no mortal might follow farther than the water's edge, should they try to follow them. Sometimes they would come out in broad daylight in twos or threes, and people say that the shepherds used to talk and chat with them; and it often happened that these fell over head and ears in love with them; but no mortal was allowed to touch them.

The time that they were to be seen in their element was on a night of full moon, when they kept their merry evening. At the very stroke of midnight they could be seen emerging from the ground in almost every cwm or valley, and, taking hold of one another's hands, they would form circles and begin to dance and sing with their whole heart until cock-crow, and then they would vanish. Many used to go to witness their performances, but it was dangerous to approach too near them, lest one should be drawn into their circle; for if they did draw him to them they would cast a spell over him, which would render him invisible to his companions, and would retain him as long as he lived. Some would venture too near, and they were drawn in; others, carried away in their youthful passions by the fascinations of their damsels, would rush headlong into their midst, to be immediately encircled and hidden from view. If the person caught could be rescued before cock-crow, he would be none the worse; but once the fairies disappeared without his being taken from their midst, he would never be seen again. The way to get one out of their circle was for two or more strong men to hold a long stick of mountain ash, placing its end in the middle of the circle, so that when he would come round in his turn, he might lay hold of it, and be pulled out. They, being spirits, would not touch the stick, nor could they snatch away the mountain ash, more than any other spirit could.

Such is the account of the fairies of this "Land of the Fairies," as given in a manuscript before us, which Principal Rhys also used in writing his chapters on *Welsh Fairy Tales*, and which is written by one whom our learned countryman considers "the best living authority I have found on the folk-lore

of Beddgelert, Drws y Coed, and the surrounding district." We will now give a story about these interesting little people, which is connected with the southern extreme of their dominion.

The Midwife of Nant Gwynen.—On one occasion, when a midwife from Nant Gwynen had newly gone to Hafodydd Brithion to discharge her wonted duties, a gentleman rode up to the door on a fine gray horse, and bade her accompany him immediately. There was so much authority in his voice that the poor woman had not the courage to say no, much as it was her duty to remain where she was. So she mounted his horse behind him, and away they went, as if on swallow's wings, through Cwmllan, over Bwlch Cwmllan, down Nant yr Aran, and over the Gadair, to Cwm Hafod Ruffydd, and that before she had time to say "Boo." When she reached there, she saw a grand palace right in front of her, most beautifully lit up with lamps, the like of which she had never seen before. They entered the court, and a crowd of attendants, clad in the costliest of garments, came out to meet them. She was immediately led through a large hall into a bed-chamber, which surpassed in splendour anything she had ever seen before. There the mistress of the house, to whose aid she had been summoned, was waiting for her. She did her part for her with every success, and remained with her until the lady was quite recovered. She vowed that it was the most pleasant episode of her life. She saw there nothing but ceaseless merriment both night and day: dancing, singing, and continual fun reigned within the place. But though so happy, she had to depart; and the gentleman gave her a large purse, and commanded her not to open it until she had reached her home. He then bade one of his servants take her back along the same path as she had come. After reaching home she opened the purse, and, to her intense delight, it was full of money, and she lived happily on these gains until she died.

The Ropes of the Fairies.—The fairies of this part delighted in a little mischief, and one or two illustrations will no doubt be relished. The son of Ffridd was returning home from Bedd

Gelert one evening, and when somewhere near Pen Caer y Gors, he could see an immense number of these little fairies hopping and skipping on the heather. He sat down to watch them, and soon became drowsy; he laid himself down and slept heavily. While he was thus sleeping, the whole host set on him, and bound him so tightly that he could not move. They then covered him over with a veil of gossamer, so that no one could see him, should he cry for help. His family expected him home early that evening, and seeing him delaying so late, they became uneasy and went to meet him. They could see nothing of him, so they went as far as the village, where they were informed that he had gone home along with the goodman of Hafod Ruffydd. So they went to see if he was at Hafod Ruffydd, but the farmer of Hafod Ruffydd said that they had separated by Glan y Gors bridge, and that each had taken his road homeward. Then both sides of the road were diligently searched from the bridge to Ffridd, but without any success. The next day was spent in ransacking the district, but all in vain. On the next evening, about the same hour as they had bound him, the fairies came and released him; he at once awoke after sleeping a whole night and a day. After awaking he had no earthly guess where he was, and so he stupidly wandered about along the sides of the Gadair and Gors Fawr, until cock-crow, when he suddenly discovered where he was, and that he was within a quarter of a mile of his home.

Ceryg Huon.—Before we give another story of the tricks of the fairies, we wish to have the reader's attention drawn to a little spot at the northern end of the Gadair. It is by the side of the little mountain brook, and immediately above the farthest end of Llyn y Gadair. Here are walls built so as to cross each other in the manner of garden footpaths, which is just what one might take them for when seen from the road. If closely examined, it will be seen that they are joined to one another, and that they form regular square patches. Just above this slope lies a level piece of ground, on which stands an extensive old ruin, sadly scattered and overgrown. On the upper side of this are remnants of two low walls, which form

a semicircular approach to perfectly round spaces. Four such spaces are connected by enclosures of the same kind as that approach.

Immediately above the ruin we find a court of a rectangular shape, in the upper end of which rests a huge stone, not unlike in shape to a capsized boat, and which appears like a cromlech thrown from its rests. These ruins, taken all together, cannot but strike us as being the remains of some very important institution. It is almost certain that it served either as a religious or poetic centre.

Rhys Goch Eryri, in one of his poems, written for a contest with John Kent (or John of Kentchurch), boasts in the chair of Myrddin the bard, by which he had been made an authorised bard.

> I in Taliesin's right would share,
> Nor bring disgrace to Myrddin's chair.

And again,

> My British privilege I claim,
> Ungrudged of all I hold my fame :
> And Snowdon keeps the far-famed stone,
> Which rightfully this day I own.

He also refers to the virtue in his poem in answer to Llewelyn ap Gwilym—

> Honour doth still the stone adorn,
> In Snowdon's height, where I was born.
>
> ELVET, *trans.*

May not these old ruins be the remains of an old bardic institution, and the hill so frequently mentioned already be called "Y Gadair," from this place?

Not far from this place there used to be an old house called Ceryg Huon, and there can be little doubt that it took its name from these ruins. Hu or Huon is connected with the old religion of the Welsh, and it may be that this place was first a religious institution, and that after Christianity had completely ousted Druidism, the poets seized it for their solemn ceremonies.

The Lively House of the Gadair.—As we have mentioned before, Elen's Road passed over the Gadair, and kept just a

little below Ceryg Huon. The farmer of Drws y Coed was going home one night from Bedd Gelert fair, along the old road over the Gadair, in a mood more merry than sad, and when he neared the top of the Gadair he saw a lovely house by the side of the road, in which there was unusual mirth. He knew very well that there was no house of that description to be anywhere on his way, and he at once came to the conclusion that he had mistaken his road, and had gone astray. He therefore made up his mind to go in and ask for lodgings, which he did. As soon as he had gone into the house he thought that a nuptial feast was going on, so great an ado was there with singing and dancing. The house was full of young men, young women, and children, each one as joyful and as lively as could be. Presently the company began to disperse one by one, and he asked if he should go to bed. He was led into a beautiful bed-chamber, with a bed of the finest feathers, covered with bed-clothes as white as snow. He at once undressed himself, went into bed, and slept quite comfortably until the morning. The first thing he remembered when about half awake the next morning was the boisterous mirth of the previous evening, and that he was put to sleep in a beautiful bed-chamber in a strange house. He opened his eyes to behold it, and it was all too large—he was sleeping on the open bogland, with a group of bulrushes as a pillow, and the vaulted sky as a ceiling!

Cwm Marchnad and Y Garn.—The narrow stream, which runs just a few yards beyond Ceryg Huon, comes down from a narrow hollow (or cwm) on the side of Drws y Coed mountain, and runs into Llyn y Gadair. The hollow is called Cwm Marchnad—the Market Hollow. Tradition says that the Welsh people, after their submission to English rule, were persuaded to establish periodical fairs at this place in order to exchange commodities, and to enable the new settlers to secure what they needed in the way of food and cattle. "In the rude pastoral districts of the island, before it could boast of any flourishing towns, commodities of every kind were brought periodically to fairs, to which the people resorted that they might make provision for the ensuing year. The

display of merchandise and the concourse of buyers and sellers at the principal, and almost only, marts of domestic trading, were prodigious. For that reason they were often kept upon open and extensive plains. They continued for several days, important privileges were attached to them, and that they might possess a greater degree of solemnity, they were associated with religious festivals. Although their utility is now diminished, our history will show that they have been among the best means, not only of promoting commerce, but also of making us acquainted with the products, the arts, and the institutions of other countries, and of extending our benevolence with our knowledge."[1]

The more level parts of the valley were full of trees in early times, and it is thought that the road into this narrow valley was from above, but there is no trace of that road at present. It is also said that the old house of Ceryg Huon, already referred to, was a public-house, and that cattle dealers lodged in the house for days during the market or fair. The small field in front of the old ruin is called Cae'r Meirch (the Horses' Field), as it was into this field the horses of strangers were turned. People were living in it as a private house as late as the year 1815, if not later.

The mountain above this cwm is called Garn, a name derived from two immense heaps of stones which are found on its summit. One of these was excavated many years ago, and a large stone chest was found within it, which proves that they were the watch-towers of some of the noble and brave men of Eryri.

The Beast with Golden Hair.—By the side of Llyn y Gadair, between the lake and the road, lies a small hillock, where the hounds of a gentleman came across a strange wild beast whilst hunting the red stag in the forest of Snowdon. In the shape of its body it somewhat resembled the wild ox, having its body covered with tufts of golden hair, which glittered brightly in the sun, and from this it was called Aurwrychyn (or Golden-Haired). The hounds chased it over the bog, through Drws y Coed as far as Bala Deulyn, where they caught it. When the dogs were in the act of killing it, the unearthly creature

[1] Bransby's *Beddgelert and its Neighbourhood*, p. 65.

sent forth a cry so loud and shrill that the hills seemed as if they were rending in twain. The place has ever since been called Nant y Llef (the Vale of the Cry), now abbreviated into the form Nantlle.

Drws y Coed Uchaf.—The gap right before us, between the two mountains of Garn and Mynydd Mawr, is called Drws y Coed. Near the pass, on this side of it, stands the farmhouse of Drws y Coed Uchaf, which was rebuilt about the seventh decade of the last century, by a man named William Gruffydd. He was a man of strong religious tendencies, and belonged to a small Moravian Church, which had been established about this time at Drws y Coed. He has left us an undisputable proof of his large-heartedness in the inscription which he has engraved on a stone above the door. The four lines, which are in Welsh, are to the following effect :—

> He who this building deigned to build
> Hath from his heart devoutly willed,
> While stone bears stone, from year to year,
> God and His cause be harboured here.
>
> ELVET, *trans.*

After death and circumstances had removed this good man and his family, the little Moravian cause dwindled considerably, and the few that were left went over to the Calvinistic Methodists. Drws y Coed has never, from that day to this, betrayed the principle of hospitality which induced William Gruffydd to fix the inscription referred to above his door.

Marrying a Fairy.—Very many years ago there lived in the farmhouse of Drws y Coed Uchaf a bright, active, brave, and determined young fellow, who used to amuse himself every evening in watching the fairies dancing, and in listening to their music. One night they came very near the house, to a field which bordered Llyn y Dywarchen, there to beguile the night in merry-making. The young fellow, as he was wont, went out to watch them, and almost immediately his eye fell on one of the damsels, whose beauty was beyond anything he had ever seen. Her countenance was like alabaster; her voice was like the voice of a nightingale, and as gentle as the breeze of a

summer's evening in a flower garden ; her bearing was graceful and noble, and she danced as lightly on the grass as the rays of the sun trips on the ripples of the lake close by. He fell in love with her over head and ears, and under the impulse of that sudden passion, when the merriment was at its height, he rushed into the middle of the fair group, clutched the lovely maiden in his arms, and ran with her into the house. As soon as the other fairies saw the violence that had been done by a mortal they made a rush for the house. But they were

(*Drawing by S. M. Jones.*)

Llyn y Dywarchen (*Lake of the Sod*).

too late ; the door was locked and bolted, and the maiden safely lodged in a room. The iron lock and bolt made it impossible for them to reclaim her. When the young man had got her under his roof, he applied every means in his power to win her affection, and to get her to consent to marry him. But to this she would on no account consent. When, however, she saw that he would not allow her to return to her own people, she offered to serve him as an ordinary servant, provided he found out her name. He, thinking that the task was by no means impossible, reluctantly agreed to the conditions.

He searched and tried every name that he had ever known, but he was not one whit nearer. Nevertheless, he was not willing to give up at once, and one evening, in returning home from Carnarvon market, he saw a group of fairies in a turbary not far from his path. They seemed as if they were seriously deliberating together in council, and he at once thought they were planning how to recover the stolen damsel. It also struck him that if he could go within hearing distance to them, he would probably find out her name. After careful inspection, he saw that a deep ditch ran through the turbary on which they were gathered, and that it passed quite near to where they stood. He went round to the ditch, and then crept on all fours along it until he came within hearing of the group. There he discovered that they were discussing the fate of the maiden which he had taken from them, and heard one of them wailing aloud, "Oh, Penelope! Penelope! my sister, my sister, why didst thou escape with a mortal?"

"Penelope, Penelope, that is her name; enough! enough!" said he. He at once crept back the same way as he had come, and reached home unobserved by the fairies. After reaching the house he called the maiden, saying, "Penelope, my dear, come here." The maiden went to him and asked him, "Oh, mortal, who hath revealed my name to thee?" and lifting up her folded hands she cried, "My fate, my fate!" However, she resigned herself to her fate, and took up her work with a will. Everything prospered in her hands, and there was not a single woman in all the country round so clean and thrifty. But the young man was by no means willing to let her be his servant, and after much pressure she consented to marry him, on condition that she should be free if ever he struck her with iron. As he was determined that that should never happen, he agreed to the conditions. So they were united in matrimony, and they lived quite happily together for years, and were blessed with two beautiful children.

But one day the husband wanted to go to Carnarvon fair, and went out to fetch a young colt that was grazing on the turbary near the house, in order to sell it at the fair. But in

spite of all his efforts he failed to catch the colt, and so called his wife to help him. She immediately came, and they succeeded in driving the young creature to a safe corner. When he was approaching to put on the bridle, the colt darted by him, and he in his anger threw the bridle after it. Alas! who stood right in front of the bridle's blow but his wife, and the iron bit struck her on her face. She immediately disappeared from sight. Her husband never saw her again. But one cold, frosty morning, a very long time afterwards, he was roused from his sleep by a gentle tapping on the glass of his bedroom window. When he had responded, he recognised the gentle voice of his wife in the following words :—

Should the cold harass my son,
See his father's coat 's put on ;
If my fair one feels the cold,
Wrap her in my skirt's thick fold.

It is said that some of the descendants of these children are still living in the parish of Bettws Garmon, and that they are easily recognisable by their light and fair complexion.

Llyn y Dywarchen.—Llyn y Dywarchen (Lake of the Sod) is immediately behind this farmhouse of Drws y Coed Uchaf. This is thought to be referred to by Giraldus, who mentions it as having "a floating island in it, which is often driven from one side to the other by the winds ; and the shepherds behold with astonishment their cattle, whilst feeding, carried to the distant parts of the lake. A part of the bank, naturally bound together by the roots of the willows and other shrubs, may have been broken off, and increased by the alluvion of the earth from the shore ; and being continually agitated by the winds, which in so elevated a situation blow with great violence, it cannot reunite itself firmly with the banks."

Pennant, referring to the above words of Giraldus, says that the lake in his time "actually exhibited the phenomenon recorded by our romantic historian." It is "of an irregular shape, and about nine yards long." Glasynys, whose inventive genius never failed him, has told us [1] in what way this floating

[1] In *Cymru Fu*, pp. 474-476.

sod came to be placed on this lake. He gives us a story almost identical with that on pp. 161-64, in which the fairy leaves her husband after being touched by the iron of the stirrup on the knee-joint. "Before her husband had reached Drws y Coed she had made her escape, and it is thought that she fled to Llwyn y Forwyn (The Maiden's Grove), and from there to the world below—the home of the fairies. She left her dear little children to her beloved's charge, and never more came near them. Some say that she nevertheless got a look at her husband occasionally in the following manner. As the law of her own country would not allow her to walk the earth with a mortal, she and her mother devised the following plan to avoid the one and enjoy the other. A large sod was made to float on the surface of the lake, and on that she would spend hours upon hours lovingly conversing with her husband; and in this way they were allowed to live together 'until he drew his parting breath.'" According to Glasynys, the son of Drws y Coed lived many years before the visit of Giraldus, or else Giraldus never saw this lake at all.

Llwyn y Forwyn.—The name of Maiden's Grove was given to the shady and sheltering copses of Llyn y Dywarchen, because it was at this place the young man met the fairy—so Glasynys explains. There were two cottages at this place, called Llwyn y Forwyn; at present there is only one. There is a tradition that Marged Fwyn ach Ifan (Evan's fair daughter Margaret), whom Pennant calls "the last specimen of the strength and spirit of the ancient British fair," lived here before she removed to Llanberis. It is said that Margaret was one of the most influential personages of the whole district. She was passionately fond of sports of all kinds, and served as one of the finest specimens of athletes in the whole country. On Sundays, the men and youths of the whole district used to gather to this place for sport and play. The favourite game was that of throwing a large stone or a heavy beam the farthest. "This game of *putting the stone* is of the highest antiquity, and seems to have been common at one period to the whole of England, although subsequently confined to the Northern counties, and to Scotland. Fitzstephen enumerates

casting of stones among the amusements of the Londoners in the twelfth century, and Dr. Pegge, in a note on the passage, calls it 'a Welsh custom.' The same sport is mentioned by Geoffrey of Monmouth among the diversions pursued at King Arthur's feast. By an edict of Edward III. the practice of casting stones, wood, and iron was forbidden, and the use of the bow substituted, yet this by no means superseded the former amusement, which was still in common use in the sixteenth century."[1]

Margaret and her friends had never heard anything of Edward III.'s edict, and refused to give the Northern counties and Scotland the monopoly. She was the prime mover, umpire, judge, and everything else in these sports; and should any disputes occur, and the partisans desired to settle them with the arguments of clenched fists, she, like Vergil's Neptune, "smoothed the swelling seas, scattered the gathered clouds, and restored the day." She was a queen, and as a queen she ruled. It is probable that Llwyn y Forwyn was called after her. As Mr. Pennant has given a catalogue of her virtues and accomplishments, we cannot do better than quote them here. "This extraordinary female was the greatest hunter, shooter, and fisher of her time. She kept a dozen, at least, of dogs, terriers, greyhounds, and spaniels, all excellent in their kinds. She killed more foxes in one year than all the confederate hunts do in ten; rowed stoutly and was queen of the lake; fiddled excellently, and knew all our old music; did not neglect the mechanic arts, for she was a very good joiner; and at the age of seventy was the best wrestler in the country, and few young men dared to try a fall with her. Some years ago she had a maid of congenial qualities, but death, that mighty hunter, at last earthed this faithful companion of hers. Margaret was also blacksmith, shoemaker, boat-builder, and maker of harps. She shoed her own horses, made her own shoes, and built her own boats, while she was under contract to convey the copper ore down the lakes. I must not forget that all the neighbouring bards payed their addresses to Margaret, and celebrated her exploits in pure British verse.

[1] Skeat's *Havelok the Dane*, p. 95.

At length she gave her hand to the most effeminate of her admirers, as if predetermined to maintain the superiority which nature had bestowed on her."[1]

We cannot give any particulars whatever as to the time she removed from this place to Pen Llyn Llanberis. She might very well have spent a good long period at each place. As we shall see later on, this district contained later "specimens of the strength and spirit of the ancient British fair," so that Pennant was put a little bit off the scent, by the locality of Margaret's abode before his visit.

A very lively old character lived at Llwyn y Forwyn during the early years of the present century, who was a great source of amusement to his neighbours. He was quite illiterate, like the majority of his neighbours, but loved to learn whatever others cared to teach him. At the time when Mr. Gladstone's book on *The Church in its Relation with the State* appeared, some one was taking round a petition for some purpose or other, and wished old John Michael (or Shôn Michal, as he was called) to sign it. But there was no getting him to do it. At last, he was asked if he was willing for Mr. Gladstone to take down the chapels. "No, indeed, I am not," said he, "and if it is against that I am to sign, I will." In the prayer meeting of the following week he was asked to engage in prayer, which he did; and in his prayer he pleaded with his Maker, "Lord, they say that some great man in Parliament wishes to pull down Thy house; O Lord, kill him, unless Thou art going to save him." The guileless old man's prayer would, no doubt, have amused Mr. Gladstone as much as any one. Indeed, it reminds one of the piece of paper which Mr. Gladstone himself handed round one morning at his breakfast table, which "contained a prayer in which the suppliant—a very distinguished lady—implored Almighty God to put an end to Mr. Gladstone's mischievous career, and to remove him from the sphere of the earth": concerning which he added, "Every word of that prayer, I believe, has been written in the utmost good faith and sincerity."[2]

[1] *Tours in Wales*, vol. ii. p. 331.
[2] See *British Weekly Supplement*, May 26, 1898.

CHAPTER XII

NANT COLWYN (*continued*).

Bwlch Culfin.—The spot that bears the name of Bwlch Culfin (or Narrow-Mouthed Pass) forms the very entrance of the Pass of Drws y Coed—a "most romantic pass, which is not much visited, although it possesses many attractions for the antiquary and the man of science, and its beauties, so wild and savage, would supply the landscape painter with the finest subjects for his pencil."[1] There used to be several old cairns at this place, erected "in sacred memory" over the spot where our ancestors laid down their lives on the altar of patriotism and freedom. But we regret to record that their descendants have treated their memory with great irreverence, for they have destroyed and torn to pieces the little spot where their mortal remains were laid, in the hope of finding peaceful rest. "About the year 1832, as a husbandman was turning the soil of a little plot of ground, his spade struck against a *cist faen*, or stone chest, which, on being examined, was found to contain ashes and burnt human bones. Soon afterwards four or five more of these chests were discovered, all of them near the same spot and at the depth of not more than a foot and a half from the surface. . . . As the *cist faen* is too small to have admitted a body at full length, it is reasonable to suppose that the body was first burnt, and that the ashes were then deposited in the *cist faen*. The bones were burnt so much as to be most of them white on the exterior, but some of them were still black and carbonaceous on the outside, and many were so within."[2]

All the stone chests did not contain ashes of burnt corpses; a fact which does not seem to have been known to the author of the above quotation. One of them contained the remains of a man of giant stature. The chin bone was large enough

[1] Bransby's *Beddgelert*, etc., p. 62. [2] *Ibid.*

to cover the chin bone of the man who discovered it, and he was a much bigger specimen of humanity than the generality of men. "The rude form of the cist feini (stone chests) and their locality seem to justify the presumption that the relics are of a very early date, and that they are purely British."

The traces of the old house of Bwlch Culfin can still be seen at this place. There used to be an old family of very noble character living in this house during the last century; and it was from this stock that the Welsh Congregationalists got one of their finest ministers—the late Rev. W. Griffith, Holyhead. His wife was a granddaughter of the William Gruffydd, Drws y Coed Uchaf, already referred to, and both had come under the influence of the Brethren (or Moravians), who were established here for a short time. This William Griffith was the college friend of Caleb Morris, the "Rev. Caleb Faithful" of *The World of Cant*; and part of the description given there of "Caleb" could be applied with equal propriety to "William." "The face was highly intellectual, yet full of benevolence. He was a teacher of the highest order; Nature evidently intended him to be so."

The Copper Mine.—The copper mine of Drws y Coed is a good way down the pass, on the right-hand side, above the road. The story of the first discovery of "the hidden wealth," worked in this mine, is told by Mr. Bransby in the following words. "A hundred (and fifty) years ago, on a fine summer's day, a pedlar, fatigued with travelling over acclivities and precipices, lay down by the path-side at Drws y Coed to rest himself. When he was dozing, he heard a loud report like a thunder-clap, which astonished him. The sound was sharp and soon over. On going to the spot from which it appeared to issue, he found that a metalliferous substance with a powerful sulphurous smell had been forced from the heart of the mountain, leaving behind its course a hole several inches in diameter. He afterwards mentioned the fact to some intrepid adventurers, and from that time to this miners have been employed in slowly tracing out, through all its windings and irregularities, the course of the vein of ore, and in extract-

ing the precious masses which have constituted the objects of their search.

"In the result we have an example of what zeal and labour, under the guidance of intellect, are able to accomplish; and if this be not a land for the odours of the spicy East, or for the vine and the olive, the myrtle and the orange, we may affirm, and affirm with truth, that there are few parts of the globe which present a succession of sublimer and more interesting objects of the eye, and that there are few in which the earth is likely to afford a more adequate recompense to the industry of man. The noise that raised the pedlar's curiosity, we have reason to believe, was occasioned by the liberation of some unknown kinds of gas, which chemical agency had produced in the deep and dark recesses of the rock, and which, after passing from crevice to crevice, had come into contact with atmospheric air, and exploded."[1]

"A singularly curious mineral, the carbonate of manganese, has lately been discovered in great abundance, and of an excellent quality, in Drws y Coed mines. One of the forms in which it presents itself is that of beautiful crystals with a pink tinge. It had previously been found nowhere but in Transylvania. The ore of strontia is another mineral which has been obtained here." Bransby's "lately" should be understood as referring to fifty years ago. Manganese is not worked at present, and the mines have probably seen their best days.

Llyn Cawellyn.—At the foot of Mynydd Mawr, by the side of the road to Carnarvon, we find Llyn Cawellyn. This name is a comparatively modern one, the old one being Llyn Tarddeni. A farmhouse of the name of Cawellyn stands on the right hand of the road in going down towards the lake from Rhyd-ddu. The first name of that farmhouse was taken from the field on which it was built—Cae Uwch y Llyn (The Field above the Lake),—and that name was naturally abbreviated. Somewhere about the beginning of the eighteenth century, the family residing in the house adopted the contracted form Cawellyn as its surname. This was probably adopted for them by the plain old Welsh custom of only using

[1] Bransby, 66, 67.

the Christian name without Mr. or Mrs., and of adding on the name of their abode for the purpose of distinguishing between them and others of the same Christian name. Then, as the lake was considered part of the Cawellyn farm, it came to be called Llyn Cawellyn. Thus, by a natural process, the field takes to it the word "Llyn," and then names the farm, the farm names the family, and the family names the lake.

"This lake abounds with the red char (called in Welsh Torgoch, or red bellies), the *Salmo alpinus* of Linnæus, a fish peculiar to the Alpine lakes. The char fishing generally commences about the beginning of January, and continues for a month, sometimes longer. They are caught with nets, no instance having been recorded of their having been taken by angling. Calm, frosty weather is the most favourable to the sport, because it is the spawning season, for during the rest of the year the fish keep in deep water at the bottom of the lake. They are about eight or nine inches in length, and considered delicious eating. At the end of the lake, on a lofty rock that constitutes a part of Mynydd Mawr, stood Castell Cidwm, one of the forts erected for the defence of this avenue into the country; the other, long since demolished, was situated at Nant, near the foot of Mount Eilio."[1]

The char has been the object of much interest and curiosity. Tradition says that they first appeared in the lakes of Llanberis, and that they were seen next in the Cawellyn. The two lakes were connected by a subterranean passage, by means of which the fish migrated from one lake to the other. The belly of the male fish is of a bright red, and that of the female of a silvery hue. They have not been known to live after being carried to other lakes, though they have been kept alive in a bucket at the edge of their home lakes for as long as two days.

The lake is about a mile and a hâlf long by half a mile wide, and can be as boisterous as a small bay on a rough coast when the wind beats it hard. It is a beautiful sight to watch its waters at such a windy season, if one can get behind a window of one of the neighbouring houses to do so. We are told that very good trout may be caught here now.

[1] Evans's *Topographical Dictionary*.

Castell Cidwm.—Castell Cidwm has already been referred to in a quotation in the previous section. It was an excellent place for a fortress, fixed as it is at the very point of Craig Cwm Bychan, and overhanging the old bridle path already traced from Carnarvon to Pont Aberglaslyn. The following story is handed down, generation after generation, in this parish, of Cidwm and Elen Lueddog.

When Elen was marching with her army from the south (probably Carmarthen) to Caer Eryri, her youngest son marched

(*Drawing by S. M. I.*) Castell Cidwm.

his men from Segontium to meet and welcome her. One of her sons, whose name was Cidwm,—the Welsh for wolf,—was an impulsive and prodigal fellow: he was filled with a deep-rooted jealousy toward his youngest brother, and was ever planning to take away his life. He had heard of this march, and had hid himself on the high and precipitous cliff on Mynydd Mawr, close by Llyn Tarddeni, beneath which ran the Roman road. He had watched his opportunity, bent on shooting his unsuspecting brother as he passed with his men. In the meantime Elen had marched as far as the hills which join the hills of Nanmor, and was resting herself and her men

by a sweet, clear spring on the roadside, in the parish of Llanfrothen. In marching through Nant y Bettws, her son had taken the rear of the regiment, and walked behind them all. Cidwm's opportunity had come, but as he emerged from his hiding-place, one of the soldiers saw him and recognised him. His bow was bent, and his arrow aimed, before his cruel intention flashed upon the mind of the soldier, who, as soon as he could collect himself, shouted, "Llech yr Ola'" (Last man, hide). Quick as lightning was the cry taken up by the whole regiment; but before the last man had time to take in the warning, the arrow of the fratricide had dealt him a deadly blow. The sad news was immediately conveyed to his mother by a batch of the soldiers, and when she heard it she threw down her sword, lifted up her hands, and cried, "Croes awr, croes awr i mi!" ("Sad hour, sad hour for me!"). The well at which she sat is called "Ffynon Croesor" (Croesor Well) to this day, and the village which has grown within a couple of hundred yards of it has been named "Croesor" from it. There is a small farmhouse also, in Nant y Bettws, called "Llech yr Ola'."

A Visit to Fairyland.—"One bright moonlight night, while on his way to Clogwyn y Gwin to see his sweetheart, one of the sons of Llwyn On, in Nant y Bettws, saw a group of fairies carousing and dancing to their heart's content, on a field by Llyn Cawellyn. He went and stood not far from them, and by degrees he was drawn, by the charming sweetness of their music, and by the nimble and lively manner of their sport, until he was right within their circle. Soon there fell upon him a certain charm, which made everything around him strange to him, and he found himself in one of the most beautiful countries he had ever seen, where every one spent his time in nothing but joy and mirth. He had been there for seven years, and yet everything was but as a dream of the night; but he remembered the message on which he had set out, and his heart longed for his sweetheart. He therefore asked permission to return home, which was given him together with a whole host of companions to lead to his own country; and all of a sudden he found himself, as if awaking

out of a dream, on the meadow on which the fairies were carrying on their sport. He then turned his face homeward, but when he reached there all was changed: his parents were dead, his brothers and sisters could not recognise him, and his sweetheart was married to another. At the thought of such changes he broke his heart, and died in less than a week after his return."[1]

Glan yr Afon Quarry.—Glan yr Afon Quarry is situated on the extreme border of the parish, and belongs to John Owen, Esq., of Ty Coch, Carnarvon, and his erudite and book-loving son, Edward H. Owen, Esq. The latter was one of four gentlemen who turned the first sod, and opened the quarry about 1878. A short time afterwards, two of the four gentlemen sold their shares to Mr. John Owen and his brother, the late W. H. Owen, Esq., of Plas yn Penrhyn, Anglesey, and their example was followed by the third; so that Mr. E. H. Owen is the only one remaining of the original company. On his uncle's death he received his interests in the quarry, so that his father and he are now sole owners. The average number of men employed at this quarry, during the last five years, is about two hundred and fifty, and the average wage compares favourably with that of other quarries of its size. The slate produced is that of the celebrated Festiniog Old Vein colour and quality, which has received the highest award at several International Exhibitions. It is an open quarry, systematically worked, and its extensive saw-mills, and manufacturing sheds, are among the finest in Wales.

Clogwyn y Gwin.—Between Glan yr Afon Quarry and Rhyd-ddu, there is a small and rocky hill, through the upper end of which passes the Narrow Gauge Railway. Within a few yards of the railway stands the ruin of two old houses, called from the hill on which they stood, Clogwyn y Gwin. But though there were two houses, they were occupied by the same family. This family has become known throughout the whole of Wales through the pen of Glasynys, and many things still linger in the parish as reminiscences of "the bachelors of Clogwyn y Gwin." It is strange that they should have been

[1] From *Y Cymrodor*, vol. iv. p. 196.

called by that name, because one of them we know to have been married, and a number of the descendants of the family still live in the neighbourhood.

The particular generation to which we shall refer, lived and flourished during the latter part of last century and the beginning of this. One of them is said to have measured seven feet in height and thirty-two inches from shoulder to shoulder, and the strength of all of them was prodigious. They were of a dark complexion, thus differing considerably from the generality of Eryri people. Pennant might have seen this family if he had not made so hurried and superficial a visit to the Vale of Colwyn. If he had seen them he would not have spoken of Marged ach Ifan as "the last specimen of the strength and spirit of the ancient British fair." These men had a sister who was another such giantess as Marged; she stood six feet three inches high, and possessed the strength of one of the brothers. She might have been seen, with her uneven, steel-coloured beard, carrying a large alpenstock, and keeping watch over the flock on the mountain-side early and late, summer and winter.

The traits which have made these people noted are their prodigious strength, and their passion for practical jokes. These two together made them at times really dangerous. They were so strong and hardy, that they had but a very imperfect notion of the capacity of others for enduring and suffering. They had been reared on the plainest and the strongest food, and knew but little, if anything, of refinement; even their weaknesses were strong weaknesses. We will give an example or two of the tales that are still told of them.

A Love of Recompense.—Their pet aversion was disappointment and deception. Whenever they were made the victims of either, they never rested until they had fully rewarded the guilty. According to the old custom, all tailoring was done in the house of the owner of the suit, and one of the sons of Clogwyn y Gwin was going to get a suit made for him by the family tailor. He had promised to go to Clogwyn y Gwin on a certain day, but did not go: another promise was got out of him, and another disappointment was received. They asked

him again, but he delayed going until they were weary of expecting. At last he went, and he had no sooner seated himself on the table than two of them surrounded him, pulled him after them into the yard, and there tied him with his face upwards on the back of a year-old colt. Letting loose the colt, they set the dogs after it, until the poor tailor, like Mazeppa,

Sped like meteors through the sky

and

Saw no bounds on either side.

When the colt had pawed the bogland, and covered one or two of the slopes, it turned its head homeward, nearly run to death. They then released it of its burden, and made the poor old tailor stuff himself with whey and curd until he was nearly bursting. He was then allowed to go on with his work. They punished him several other times equally severely, and at last the tailor learnt his lesson, and when called for would go without delay, with the result that he became thoroughly happy among them.

The Last killed at Waterloo.—One of the brothers of Clogwyn y Gwin was among the brave men of Waterloo, and we can imagine what a fine soldier he must have been. He used to relate a story of the last scene of that eventful day, by which he proved that the last shot fired on the field was by himself. During the bitter and dogged contest, an immense number had fallen around him, some to die as they fell, others to lie about groaning with agonising pain. When the struggle was nearly ended he received a bullet in his knee-cap, which stretched him full length on his back. When the battle was over the soldiers cleared away, and nothing but the dead and wounded were left on the field. There he lay quietly suffering and enduring, when he saw the shadow of a head. He raised his head to see what it was, and lo! there he could see a little woman going rapidly from one body to the other, robbing their jewels and all other valuables. If one of them happened to be still living, she would tap him hard on his forehead with a little hammer, which she carried in her left hand, and thus give him his quietus. When she saw his head uplifted, and per-

ceived that he was watching her movements, she nodded to him, as much as to say, "All right, I will be with you presently." It bethought him that his gun was by his side, so he quietly stretched out his hand, picked it up gently, and pointed it at her. "The next minute she was tumbling head over heels," said he, "and that was the last shot at Waterloo."

Signs of Cremation.—The discoveries mentioned on p. 168 are not alone, as the following fact will show. Some thirty-five years ago, while Mr. John Edmunds (now living at Ty'n y Coed) and his brother were ploughing on one of the fields of Glan yr Afon, they found a vessel about the size of a quart, which had been buried in the earth within a stone chest. It was not more than about a foot below the surface, and the reason why it was not discovered before is given in the fact that tilling was not much known in these parts in earlier years. They placed the vessel, which contained ashes, on top of the wall close by, and before they had ploughed another furrow it had been scattered by the wind, vessel and all, so that not a scrap remained. This was not more than some two hundred yards from the present high-road.

The Village of Rhyd-ddu.—There is nothing very remarkable about this little mountain village. It is partly made up of old-fashioned workmen's cottages, and partly of the modern cottages. There are several nice houses thrown in among the simpler structures, many of which are devoted to the service of hungry and weary sojourners. There is only one licensed house in the village, and that is an ordinary village tavern, which supplies the usual goods of the beer-house without any pretence at catering for visitors. It stands just outside Bedd Gelert parish.

A Calvinistic Methodist church meets the requirements of the great majority of the inhabitants, as far as means of grace is concerned, and a very good schoolhouse receives the minor members of the village and neighbourhood for their daily instruction. Both the pastor and the schoolmaster are very well provided with houses, and both are in every way deserving men. The village has grown considerably since the opening

of Glan yr Afon Quarry, upon the success or retrogression of which depends its future development or depopulation.

The fine house opposite the station was built as a hotel, but the failure to procure a license has upset that arrangement, and the occupier makes the best of his luck. The station was once called after the name of the village, but the directors of the Narrow Gauge Railway have thought better of it, and have changed it into "Snowdon Station," and the result has no doubt justified their course. It is from within a few yards of the platform the path to Snowdon begins, and we do not hesitate to say that this is the shortest and best of the beaten tracks.

Mur Murianau.—Following the Rhyd-ddu path to Snowdon, we come to a structure called the "Half-Way House," and made of corrugated iron, which supplies the usual refreshments at fairly moderate prices. Those who were well acquainted with this path always made a point of resting here, as it is the last place where a drink of water from the rocks can be secured. Those who had taken the precaution of carrying a little to eat with them made the best use of it here, so as to be the better able to battle with the harder half of the journey. Now, of course, the uninitiated will take the hint from the very existence of this house, and will need no friendly advice.

How few of those who have passed this spot during the last eighty or ninety years have ever noticed anything peculiar about it! As a level patch, on a very rugged mountain slope, its very ease to the limbs of the painfully wearied descender must have arrested a little attention, but it never dawned upon the thousands that have passed through its very centre that this was once "holy ground." When the reader visits this sacred spot, he will see at its upper end, on the left-hand side of the path, some old sheepfolds. Let him stand by these, and take in every detail connected with its features, ignoring for the time being the "Half-Way House," and the little stone structure recently erected in front of the sheepfolds. He will see the remains of several circular huts, on some of which the sheepfolds themselves have been erected. Then he will look

straight in front of him in a south-western direction, and he will see a small hillock of all but bare rock, which forms a natural wall on that side of the flat space. On the right-hand side he will find traces of an old wall, which ran from the rock behind him to the hillock opposite, and another wall, similar to the one on our right, enclosed the space on the left, traces of which still remain visible. The rock behind him formed the fourth wall. These two natural walls, and the walls on our right and left, enclose a space of about 180 feet by 120 feet.

On the rocky elevation in front of him he will see a large stone of an irregular triangular shape, resting on three small stones, one at each angle. Its thinnest angle points to the enclosure, and the whole stone seems to lean in that direction. Its upper surface is slightly dented. Close by, to the right of it, are two similar but smaller stones; these also, no doubt, rested at one time on three stone props, but have now slipped off, crushing their supports under them. Everything bears evidence of order and arrangement, and the tradition of the neighbourhood probably preserves a true explanation of the ruins. Its explanation is that they are the remains of a famous old temple, right on the ascent of the Welsh Parnassus, where Druidical ceremonies were performed in all their pomp. The circular huts may either have belonged to the sacred institution, or to a later time, when they provided shelter for the small bands of skirmishers who strove to drive back the oppressors of their land.

The meaning of the name Mur Murianau is "Mur y Muriau" (The Enclosure of Enclosures), or the Chief Sanctuary. We very much hope that the establishment, which is now erected on this level space, will not lead to the obliterating of the traces of these old ruins.

Cwm Tre Weirydd.—From Mur Murianau the reader may either make his own path towards Cwm Tre Weirydd, by taking a north-north-western direction over the trackless rocks, or he may proceed along the beaten track upwards. He will probably take the latter, and when he has gone up a long way, the path will lead him near an extremely precipitous rock. From the edge of this he can look down the melancholy

hollow below. Within this hollow, which is called Cwm Tre Weirydd, there once flourished a large and well-known city, which was established by a British chieftain of the name of Gweirydd. It still contains the remains of Cytiau'r Gwyddelod, as well as of old ramparts made of earth and stone. The local tradition is rapidly losing hold of the minds of the inhabitants, for we surprised several people at Rhyd-ddu by calling the cwm by that name. They know it as "Cwm Glan yr Afon" or "Cwm y Clogwyn." The latter name has always been given to the lower portion of the cwm, but a large number have only that name for the whole of it.

This great hollow is set with the silvery waters of four not very large lakes or tarns, viz. Llyn Ffynon y Gwas, the largest and the farthest from us; Llyn Glas, to be distinguished from Llyn Ffynon Las on the opposite side of the peak; Llyn Coch, the middle of the three, and Llyn y Nadredd, the lowest. They all, with the exception of the last, contain fish, but as the beds of the lakes are peaty, they are of an inferior quality. The little rill that runs from the steep slope beyond, into Llyn Glas, is called "Ffos Owen Glyndwr" ("The Gully of Owen Glyndwr"), for what reason we have been unable to find out, and there is no explanation offered by tradition. Should time and leisure permit, the river of Tre Weirydd is worth following, either up or down. There is not a prettier series of small cascades in the whole of Snowdonia than those to be seen along the course of this rivulet.

The first time we ascended Snowdon along this path was on a bright moonlight night in the early part of September 1895. As we reached the part of the path that runs near this precipitous place, we found three of the nimbler and less care-loaded members of our party, who had outdistanced us, standing above it and throwing stones into the dense white mist, which filled up the hollow to the brim, but which left the convex part of the mountain perfectly clear. As we approached they asked us to listen to the splashing of the waters in the lakes below, as the stones dropped. We could only hear a faint noise, which they confessed to be much fainter than the splashes which they had heard before our arrival. Others

tried the experiment, but without success. In about five minutes afterwards, the mist, which had been there from soon after sunset until about half-past two, had entirely disappeared, and great was our amusement at seeing the lakes in the distance, far out of the reach of the throw of a giant. We could invent no explanation for the splashing sound heard by our friends. We shall be glad to have one.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SNOWDON SUMMIT

Clawdd Coch.—We are now facing the steepest part of the Rhyd-ddu ascent, where a steady effort is necessary for the surmounting of the sharp bit between us and the Saddle. The straight path is meant for descending, and the zigzag path for those ascending, but many who do not try, nor wish, to economise their strength, treat the zigzag path with contempt.

The next point of interest to which we come is Clawdd Coch (The Red Hedge or Embankment), which tourists have named "The Saddle," with the usual result that it is fast replacing the proper name. Bingley writes of it as, "This narrow pass, not more than ten or twelve feet across, and two or three hundred yards in length, was so steep that the eye reached on each side down the whole extent of the mountain; and I am persuaded that in some parts of it, if a person held a large stone in each hand, and let them both fall at once, each might roll above a quarter of a mile, and thus, when they stopped, they might be more than half a mile asunder. There is no danger whatever in crossing Clawdd Coch in the daytime, but I must confess that I should by no means like to venture along this track in the night, as many do who have never seen it. If the moon shone very bright we might, it is very true, escape unhurt; but a dark cloud coming suddenly over would certainly expose us to much danger. Many instances have occurred of persons who, having passed over it in the night,

were so terrified at seeing it by daylight the next morning, that they have not dared to return the same way."[1]

Had Bingley crossed Clawdd Coch by moonlight for the first time, he would probably have felt like ourselves, that the scene by daylight is tame as compared with its indescribable weirdness by the night-light of nature. We have been over it several times by night, and the least sensational venture was the one on a night in September, when Snowdon was almost entirely enveloped to its very foot in a mist that soaked us through; and nothing will ever erase from our memory the beautiful moonlight night when we crossed for the first time. There was that fine mist, so characteristic of the mountain, hanging imperceptibly between us and the moon, and its light reached us only as through a vaporous gauze, and the weird effect of the twofold abyss thrilled us almost into a swoon. It was awful; but we have ever since been madly in love with Snowdon. Clawdd Coch dangerous! Not in the least, except for gymnastics, or when it blows a gale.

Summit Hotel.—There is a good distance between Clawdd Coch and the summit, and every one who is not a hardened mountaineer will need a few short rests before he reaches the top. Exhaustion will make it difficult for us to remain any time at the little station, to examine the wonderful contrivance which has made Snowdon ponies obsolete, and so we pass on to the Summit Hotel, to procure the much-needed refreshment. The wise will avoid anything more stimulating than tea or coffee, whether he be an abstainer or not, and without prejudice to the interests of the refreshment rooms.

The excellent idea of providing refreshments on the summit of Snowdon is now over sixty years old, and belongs to a miner, who was at that time working in Clogwyn Coch copper mine. His name was Morris Williams, and his native place Amlwch, in Anglesey. It was while busily engaged in the mine that it occurred to him how large a number climbed Snowdon during the summer months, and that perhaps it would pay him to provide a small hut near the summit, where they might get something to refresh themselves. He tried the

[1] Bingley, *North Wales*, pp. 262, 263.

experiment once or twice without the hut, taking with him tea, coffee, butter, bread, and cheese, and was soon convinced that a living could be made there.

The first hut was built about 1837 or 1838, and was situated below the summit cairn, on the property of Hafod y Llan. Its outer walls were of stone, and its inner lining of neatly planed boards. Morris Williams could neither speak

(*Leach, Carnarvon, Photo.*)

Summit Station. Summit Hotels.

nor understand English, and his business suffered in consequence. In order to get over this difficulty he took one of the guides, William Williams by name, into partnership; and he, thinking to add to the attraction of Snowdon, dressed himself in a suit of goat-skin, consisting of cap, coat, and trousers, which made him appear like a savage from the land of perpetual snow. The strange dress did its part well, and the flocking visitors soon made the humble summit hut a paying concern.

John Roberts, Blaen y Ddôl, Llanberis, was a guide at this time, and was on the summit nearly every day. He perceived that the keepers of this hotel-in-miniature were on the high road to a solution of their own problem of "a living wage." He thought he would start an opposition, and as the mountain was then, just as it is at present, the property of three different people, he went to Sir R. W. Bulkeley, Baron Hill, to secure a spot for a hut, and succeeded in his errand. The tent was pitched on the spot where now stands a respectable structure, on the Llanberis side of the peak, and soon took away the greater part of the business done. There was nothing for it but to remove the prior structure to the top too; the wood lining the old hut was taken to build the new one, and the competition was placed on a fairer basis.

Very soon afterwards, Morris sold his share to his brother, Phillip Williams, and the next thing we find is that Phillip and John Roberts have united their interests by a formal partnership. We lose sight of William Williams all at once, and we cannot account for his disappearance, unless, indeed, it was about this time he lost his life. He had been once a boots at the Dolbadarn Hotel, and was known by all as "William y Boots"; he lost his life in seeking for rare plants, and the gully into which he fell is known to this day as the Gully of William the Boots.

Visitors now became more numerous every year, and the partners determined to apply for a license to sell intoxicants. It was agreed that John Roberts should make the formal application, and that the license should be in his name; but when Roberts had secured the license, he refused to let Williams have any advantage from it, and the partnership was dissolved. After a while Phillip Williams discovered that the summit was in the Bedd Gelert parish, and that Portmadoc was the proper place to apply for a license. He made several applications, and was each time successfully opposed by Roberts; but his perseverance ultimately succeeded, and from that day to this two licenses are granted for the summit, one at Carnarvon and one at Portmadoc. The right of Carnarvon to grant a license for the summit is one of those

obscure points with which British law teams. John Roberts died and left his interests to his nephew; Phillip Williams died, and his daughter kept his hut on after him, until Mr. Robert Owen purchased the lease from her, in 1879. He and Thomas J. Roberts joined their business, and things went on smoothly until the Snowdon tramway was mooted, when these thriving men began to be harrassed by notices to quit, and attempts to secure a license for another summit hotel. Assheton Smith, Esq., Vaynol, gave them notice to quit, in order to place the summit at the disposal of the Tramway Company, but he could only claim one-third of the area on which the huts were built, and so could not enforce the notice.

The struggle ended by the Company buying up Roberts's rights, and taking over Owen's lease for fourteen years, Owen having in the meantime built a good and commodious wooden structure, for which twenty tons of timber had to be carried up on men's backs and shoulders, along the Rhyd-ddu path. Roberts's hut was only replaced at the beginning of last summer, after doing service for fifty-eight years, by a very excellent structure on the Llanberis side.

At present the Tramway Company has handed over the management of the whole business to Miss Amos, who opens out at Easter, and closes for the winter about the last week in September. An average of about one hundred and fifty per day visit the summit from April to June, and of no less than seven hundred from July to the second week in September. Should any one care to spend the night on Snowdon, in order to witness the sunrise, between fifteen and twenty can be accommodated with beds.

Views from Snowdon.—Snowdon is the grand stand of Wales, from which the wonders of the kingdom may be seen. "From this elevated situation may be seen, in clear weather, the Wicklow Hills on the west; the Isle of Man, and the Cumberland and Westmoreland mountains on the north and north-east; and a part of South Wales to the south-west."[1] But it is not the distant sights, nor the mere landscape alone, that form the attractions of the summit of Snowdon, but the

[1] *Hist. of Carn.* p. 118.

myriad changes through which nature seems to pass during even a short hour of observation. We see sides and summits of mountains, hollow crags, masses of rocks, castle towers, church spires, modest villages, aspiring towns, seas, woods, rivers, glens, all scattered in magnificent confusion, and our hearts leap with satisfaction at the grandeur and sublimity of the scene: but add to these the vision described in the follow-

(*Leach, Carnarvon, Photo.*)

Llyn Llydaw from the Summit (Siabod in the Distance).

ing quotation, and then command the tongue to silence, if it dares to utter speech amid the unspeakable things we see.

"You may conceive a group (for we found other parties on the summit) of apparently aerial beings standing on an elevated peak, literally above the clouds; for the glorious source of day shed his beams upon our heads, while our feet were enveloped in mist. Picture to yourself the sea, when agitated by a storm, suddenly arrested by an intense frost, for such was absolutely the appearance the congregated mists and clouds represented to our astonished and enraptured eyes. In the course of

about ten minutes, or a quarter of an hour, this irregular surface of waves began to break up and separate, and, like an immense army, sent advanced guards and columns in different directions. The commotion at the first breaking up, and the regular movement afterwards, were grand and magnificent beyond description. After these advanced guards (which were generally fleecy, transparent clouds, with fringes and festoons hanging in different fantastic shapes, and reflected beams of the sun throwing golden tint upon their edges) came the army. Presently, through the mist, several huge mountains reared their leviathan backs, and immense projections, appearing like so many capes and promontories, stretching out into an endless ocean, while other rocks assumed the appearance of small conical islands in the resplendent abyss. In a short time these advancing armies regularly encamped, or *bivouack'd*, for the night in the different passes and excavations of the mountains. This was not all, for as we descended, while these beautifully transparent mists were quietly at rest, some hundreds of yards below us, we suddenly beheld huge gigantic shadows, thrown athwart the immense abyss. This was about five in the evening, for with a reluctance similar to that of our great progenitors in leaving Paradise, we lingered on the summit some hours. We stopped and gazed; our sticks and umbrellas were converted by the reflection into Goliah of Gath's tremendous club or weaver's beam. We began to brandish these weapons, and, to our great amusement and astonishment, our lengthened bulky shadows gently imitated our different movements."[1]

Of course, what is here described is not the actual vision seen, but only its memory; and though such memories are very pleasant reading, we must content ourselves with the above, for different eyes see differently even when they gaze upon the same things.

A Sunrise from Snowdon.—A friend of ours had ascended Snowdon over thirty times before he had a clear sunrise, and testifies that three times thirty ascents would have been amply rewarded by one sunrise. Some are unfortunate enough to

[1] *Hist. of Carn.* pp. 119-121.

see the unique sight the first time, and, like the Mohammedans, who take out their eyes after seeing Mahomet's grave, so that they may gaze on nothing less sacred again, refuse to climb the height the second time. Others persevere time after time, each time fairly sanguine of favour, yet without success; still they sing on—

We'll boldly climb the mountain height,
That rises like a giant sprite,
And laughs at Phœbus chasing night
On steeds of fire.
Midst blooming heather, pink and pale,
The verdant hill-slope's spicy gale
Now sings above the fragrant vale,
Climb, climb up higher.

Should obstacles in myriads rise,
Like Anak hills, to span the skies,
A heath'ry pathway o'er them lies,
And charms the lyre.
Laugh all thine hindrances away,
So shall thy strength be as thy day.
Then join'd be faith with footsteps gay;
Climb, climb up higher.[1]

A very animated and poetic account is given in *Golud yr Oes* (p. 42), by a member of a group of twelve who visited Snowdon after the Carnarvon Eisteddfod of 1862, of the magnificent sunrise of August 30th of that year; and we cannot do better than quote the following free rendering of a passage from that account.

"Before the pleasant time arrived (for the sunrise) the refreshment booth was crowded, each one eagerly welcoming the blessings of Providence, and making himself comfortable in both body and mind, before the glorious feast. When it was mentioned that the moment was nigh, all but one or two mouthed their eatables and swallowed their hot coffee, and rushed to the vantage spot. It was a splendid crowd, and every mind was filled with a trembling expectancy of a magnificent demonstration—an expectancy which became more and

[1] Dyfed, translated by the Rev. J. Ossian Davies, for a duet by Mr. D. Jenkins, Mus. Bac.

more intense as signs of the sun's approach appeared. Now the reward of our expectation is about to be presented to us by the very hand of heaven itself! See, a brightness like an angel's smile lightens the fringe of the east; again, a bolder and more animated flash, of a crescent form, thrills the sky into a blush, and vaster riches bubble forth from an eternal store, until the woolly clouds are bordered round with ample gilding; wave upon wave of splendour break in golden foam upon the horizon, and, as if the Possessor of All had planned to overwhelm us with the ceaseless flood of His riches, the whole sky is baptized in the sea of indescribable beauty before us. 'Tis truly said by the poet—

"An undevout astronomer is mad.

"Ah! now the golden flood runs over the troughs of heaven, and enshrouds the peaks of mountains, which seem to have congregated together for the purpose of joining, at the glorious dawn, in dumb worship to the God who has so generously adorned them. A scene like this makes one grieve at the poverty of language; we must needs have the language and gifts of angels before we can ever hope to describe it properly. . . . It was a comfort and a relief, after 'the thrill which almost throttled,' to find the glistening splendour being partly clouded over by a merciful mist, which mediated between us and its fiery face.

"Nothing more clearly proves the intensity of the feeling which possessed every heart than the tangible silence which prevailed on that wonderful moment. Man's highest eloquence is muteness, and nothing else becomes a deep emotion. Once we begin to whisper or speak, the feeling relaxes. It was so with us. After the mute enthusiasm had abated a little, the harp was struck by the apostle of the Welsh Harp, Mr. Llewelyn Williams, and the impressed crowd joined heartily in *Codiad yr Haul*[1] (The Rising of the Sun); and from the moment when it first opened its laughing eyes in Eden, we do not believe that a more hearty and reverent reception was

[1] The melody used by Handel in the chorus "Happy We" in *Acis and Galatea*.

ever accorded the sun than was given it by the bards of the Carnarvon Eisteddfod on 'the Snowdon summit' that morning."

"A scene like this makes one grieve at the poverty of language," says Creuddynfab, and we certainly quote his sentiment with approval. As for ourselves, we are only too glad to borrow from his supply of thought and words, to hide our own poverty, and to save ourselves the pain of seeking in vain for either a definite form or expression for our feelings in the enjoyment of a similar boon. Had it not been for the above passage, we would have been tempted, if in our wiser mood, to do as that Welsh minister did when lecturing on America, after a visit to that continent of wonders, when he came to speak of the Niagara: "We now come to the Niagara Falls," said he, and there was a long pause, after which he quietly added, "It was there I saw the finest field of clover I have ever seen in my life."

Summit Visitors.—All kinds and conditions of men have been on the highest peak of Snowdon during the present century, and for very many years the climb has been among the things of fashion. There is scarcely a civilised nation under the sun that has not been represented here at some hour or other, and all invariably have been greatly astonished at the magnificent views which they have seen. Some even go so far as to affirm that Switzerland can only surpass the Snowdon panorama in size. Mr. Owen, the late keeper of one of the booths, prides himself with having served the Duke of Connaught, Professors Ramsay, the geologist, and Butler, the botanist, with food and drink in the most exalted refreshment room in Wales. Snowdon is rich in its fossils and rare plants, and Eryri lads made a good thing of these at one time; but now all fossil collectors are fossil seekers, and all plant lovers are plant hunters, and so the boys have to live on their past gains.

One of the marvels of Snowdon climbing is the feat of a blind man, who walked up the Llanberis path without any assistance whatever, except that of his stick. The truth of the case is vouched for by Mr. Robert Owen, who seems to have

witnessed few things more pathetic than the sight of this man walking up towards the booths with every confidence. He tells us that the blind are frequent visitors to Snowdon, but always coming with friends. The Rev. J. Puleston Jones, M.A., Dinorwic, has been several times on the summit seeing the wonders of nature. The questions of the blind about the

(*Leach, Carnarvon, Photo.*)
Summit, August 1898.[1]

scenery are far more interesting, varied, and detailed than the questions of those who can see, and here the booth-keepers have been delighted with their requests for the names of yonder mountain and the distant lake, of the winding river before them, and so on. They seem to see far more than those with eyes.

[1] The above has J. C. Chubb, Esq., Carshalton, and his nurse, Miss A. E. Duncan, M.R.B.N.A., in the centre. Mr. Chubb is a great frequenter of Snowdon.

A very great number of people prefer the climb to the ride up the mountain, but the majority of those who ascend from Llanberis take the train. The finest day of last August induced no less than two thousand two hundred to ascend, about a thousand of whom had booked for the double journey; the two hundred rode one way, and the other thousand walked it up—the greater part along the Rhyd-ddu path. There is nothing so invigorating as mountain-climbing, and where is there such a mountain for climbing as Snowdon? Every one should *climb* it once up each of the four beaten tracks, and very few should experiment on its steeper ridges.

Snowdon in Perspective.—Many are the paintings, sketches, and photographs of Snowdon, taken from almost every direction from which its ruggedness can be represented. Some of the photographs which contain a certain mountain in the distance, and are marked as so-and-so and Snowdon, are either the fruit of fraud or ignorance. Some of the leading firms of photographers in the kingdom send their representatives to these districts, but of no district can instances of such gross misrepresentations be enumerated as this district. For how many years more will the public be asked to pay honest money for these misrepresentations? When will photographers admit the value of a little elementary knowledge of the geography of a district in the use of their valuable art? Snowdon and Bedd Gelert village cannot be in the same photograph, unless the photograph be faked, and yet there lies before me a photograph called "Beddgelert and Snowdon."

A very excellent view of Snowdon may be had from Drws y Coed, Nant y Bettws, Llanberis, Pen y Gwryd, Capel Curig, or near Bethania; but the most magnificent of all is from the Glyders, from which place its companions, Lliwedd, Crib Goch, Crib y Distyll, set it off to a nicety. It is worthy of the best that art can do for it, and we should like to see a painting of this majestic pile from the above position, with a July sun setting in the distant west. Does a painter seek immortality? let him study the attractive outlines of "the Hill of Snow."

> Proudly doth Snowdon lift its head on high,
> Its massive halls for refuge fitly formed.

O princely pile, upgrowing from the vale,
Adorning all, thyself adorned with might.
In battle thou art Gwyneth's bolted door,
The people's refuge in the hour of need;
Of old vested with unyielding ice,
With cowl of snow that gleamed athwart the sky.
God built thee, built thee strong, and vast, and well,
Preventing and outlasting Babel's tower.
Of thee, and of thy story, Britain boasts,
Building of God, and stronghold of the brave.

Such is Elvet's excellent rendering of Dafydd Ddu Hiraddug's address to Snowdon.

"*The Shepherdess of Snowdon.*"—*Bugeiles yr Wyddfa* is one of the favourites of Welsh songs, and it is full of the "spirit of Snowdon." The author of *Aylwin* has made a very beautiful use of it in that most delightful story, and the reader may not deem it amiss if we give a rendering of Eos Bradwen's piece here.

I once met a fair little maiden,
Low down the Hill of the Snow;
Her hair was as black as the raven,
Of foot she was swift as a roe;
Her cheeks were red as roses,
Her form as fair as morn,
She sang a song, drove sheep along
The path down Snowdon worn.

Chorus—

Old hilly Eryri for me,
The home of the harp and song,
Where the flocks ever feed,
'Mid the moss, rush, and reed,
My song winging up to the summit,
And echo replying, "the summit,"
Whence eagles once reared their young.

"Wilt thou," then I asked that fair maiden,
"Leave home and thy land for my heart?
I'll give thee a palace to dwell in;
Thy cot leave, and let us depart."
I begged her, and I prayed her,
That humble home to leave.
With smile and song she tripped along,
And left me there to grieve.

A cloud came and covered the summit,
No change e'er so great have I known;
The heights seemed all furious with anger,
The storm in great torrents poured down.
I lost that lovely maiden,
But from the scowling height
Came notes as sweet as stars which greet
Wayfarers dead of night.

CHAPTER XIV

NANT GWYNEN

Its General Features.—The valley of Nant Gwynen is entered even before we leave the village, and for close upon eight miles it stretches its winding course until it reaches the little bridge beyond Pen y Gwryd. There is not a valley in Eryri which possesses such varied scenery as this one does. It is rich in quiet, subdued, and peaceful spots—nooks where the heart may commune with itself for ever; it is wild with peaks and ridges, and romantic with crags that refuse to be tamed and quieted. Yet it is not without cultivated fields, and constantly grazed meadow land. Glaslyn the bard—not to be confounded with Glasynys—after gazing at its beauties from Craig y Llan, sang of its varied and charming scenery in verses worthy of his unquestionable poetic genius, and which won for him the prize at the well-known Bedd Gelert Eisteddfod in 1860. We quote Elvet's translation of a few verses.

How varied the scenes that enrapture our eyes!
Dark rock and grey precipice ruggedly rise,
While the green growing sward, and the bright pebbled beach
Lie sheltered below them, each mingling with each.

On many a slope, see the wandering flocks,
And the firm-footed goats in the ledge of the rocks;
While shepherds each other will merrily keep
With the skill of a dog, and the trick of a sheep.

Pale stretches of grass to the bare heights ascend,
And yellowing ferns o'er the dark rocks extend,
While over their bosoms flow tiniest streams,
Like silvery chains with a thousand bright gleams.

Its brow to the heavens yon Snowdon makes bare,
Queen of the wandering clouds of the air;
How calmly it watches them all through the day,
Arranging their places and marking their way.

Until the year 1805 there was no better provision for the traveller than the old pack-horse path, and where the rocks projected out sharply there was only a very narrow space between them and the river, in the narrower parts of the valley. When the river was flooded these places were not at all safe. William Williams, Llandegai, says that "through this charming valley, like all other mountainous unimproved roads, the road is very bad, circuitous, and winding, and absolutely impassable when the floods are violent after a fall of rain. It is much to be regretted that gentlemen who have property in this and other such vales are so indifferent and inattentive, that they do not open a communication with the country by means of new and safe roads." [1] Before this boon was given to the public, the valley, in part at least, had to fall into the hands of fresh proprietors. One of the gentlemen who had most to do with the opening up of the present road was W. A. Madocks, Esq., who connected Llanrwst and Porth Dinllaen with the intention of getting the Irish mail-boat to land its mail and cargo there, instead of at Holyhead. He was supported in this excellent scheme by Captain Parry, Pwllhalog, and Mr. Daniel Vawdrey.

"The entrance into this valley," says W. Williams, "from Bedd Gelert village is but the breadth of a narrow rugged road close by the side of a river, which promises no great gratification to the curiosity of the traveller, but how agreeably he must be surprised on being conveyed into, as it were, enchanted ground. I could not refrain from moralising on my first entrance into it by calling to mind that saying of our Saviour, 'Narrow is the way which leadeth into life.' But

[1] *Observations*, etc., p. 57.

the blessedness of that state would make ample recompense for our toils and labours on our passage towards it." [1]

By the old Mill Bridge one can clearly see the marks of blasting, where the narrow path has been widened into a road. After leaving this narrow pass, the mountains retreat, and a small but beautiful valley comes into view, which measures about a mile and a quarter in length. On one side is the ore-coloured mountain of Sygun, and on the other side is the verdant Aran, with its multiformed hills and rocks. Near its farthest end is Dinas Emrys, and right through its very centre meanders the river Gwynen.

After reaching the farthest end of this valley, the hillsides of the Vale of Gwynen are drawn together once more, and form another narrow pass. But immediately we reach the pass a magnificent view opens out before us. Right before us is Llyn Dinas, which is about a mile in length and half a mile in breadth. On our left is the precipitous steep of Gallt y Llyn, which is covered with heather, fir-trees, hazel-trees, oak, and ash. On the right is the lovely hill of Llyndu. At the upper end of the lake are beautiful meadows, surrounded by woody hills. Under the shelter of one of these sylvan hills, on a green hillock facing the lake, stands a small but comely palace, called Plas Gwynant.

Once more the vale is contracted into a narrow pass, beyond which it leans a little to the left. As soon as we work our way through this, we face one of the most romantic valleys in the whole of Wales. We are here at the foot of the highest mountains in the parish. Right in front of us is Lliwedd ; on our left is Geuallt ; and between these two lies the deep valley that runs to Cwmllan, the upper end of which is blocked up by the Wyddfa. It is from here, probably, we get the grandest view of "The Queen of the wandering clouds," as Glaslyn calls it, and we are led to exclaim :—

> Oh ! mighty Eryri, thy ramparts of old
> Were often our valiant forefathers' stronghold :
> Our princes for refuge sought thee in their woe,
> While thy stones hurled destruction on many a foe.

[1] *Observations*, etc., pp. 50, 51.

The precipice bare, the height where clouds meet,
The storm-haunted pass, the peaceful retreat —
In these are the chronicles written of yore
How our forefathers struggled, what those forefathers bore.
GLASLYN ; ELVET, *trans.*

The vale again stretches on, gradually contracting into another pass, almost as narrow as the first three, from which we see another lake, which even surpasses the first in beauty. This is Llyn Gwynen. It looks like a gem set in costly metal. The most prosaic can scarcely miss the inspiration which this valley gives. It seems flooded with beauty as the eye takes in its thousand features. On its left side stands an immense mountain, rising from the waters of the lake, steep as a precipice, and speckled with hazel and hawthorn ; and on the narrow ledges of loose and threatening rocks may be seen the gray-coloured, steady-headed goats, looking as if rejoicing in the watery mirror which reflects them in the depths below. On our right are woody slopes, on which stand the summer seats of Mr. Vawdrey and Mr. Wyatt. After this lake the valley opens up through well-cultivated meadows as far as Pen y Gwryd.

A Princely Grant.—As we shall dwell upon the various parts in this Vale of Gwynen, we shall endeavour to put in a few sentences relating to the history of the property within its boundaries. Such being our intention, we cannot find a better place for the following extract from an old charter than this, since we have no knowledge which takes us farther back, and since we will have to refer to it now and again for various purposes.

It seems that the whole vale from Pen y Gwryd to the village, together with the whole of Nant Colwyn on the Snowdon side of the river Colwyn, as far as Bwlch Cwmllan, was given to the monks of Aberconway by Llewelyn the Great, in the year 1198. The principal farms are mentioned in this extract by their present names, and the boundaries described accord surprisingly with the present boundaries, as also do the names of the mountains, their tops and ridges, and the rivers.

I have granted in addition and secured to the aforesaid monks these lands at *Nanhoenem*, namely, *Gwascat onnos*,[1] *Bryngwynem*,[2] *Hafat Tandrec*,[3] *Llyndu*, *Chwmygoret*,[4] *Scubordynemreis*,[5] *Hendrefwynein*, *Wernosdet*,[6] *Pennant Morgenen*, *Pennant Crwnn*, together with *Llem*[7] on either side of *Llem*, *Chwmerth*[8] on either side of the *Erth*, *Chwmdelif*[9] on either side of the *delif*, *kemen trinemt*,[10] and *Gwryd*,[11] *kei*[12] on either side of the *Degymm*,[13] along the boundaries hereinafter specified, namely, going up from *Abercolwyn*[14] as one comes down into *ferlas*,[15] along the middle of the *Colwyn* up to *Blaencolwyn*[16] as one comes down from *bwlch chwmllem*.[17] From this point along the brink of the rocks up to the summit of *Wedduavaur*.[18] From this point to the summit of *Gribgoch*. From this point to the top of *Wregyssant*.[19] From this point along the height of the rocks as far as the seat of *peris*.[20] From this point to the top of *Moel-berned*.[21] From this point in a straight line up to the place where the *Member*[22] begins to rush down like a torrent. From this point along the middle of the stream *Member* up to *Eranongoch*.[23] From this point going up along the aforesaid stream to *Llegat Erych*.[24] From this point to the top of *Cerric-ergylch*.[25] From this point to *Lleth-edcar*.[26] From this point to *bankarw*.[27] From this point along the top of the rocks of *Bancaru* as far as *blean-teyrw*. From this point along the river *Teyru*[28] as far as the rock which comes down into the *Teyru* close by *Ryt Teyru Uchaf* (the upper). From this point along some small rocky hills on the side of *Gerryni* up to *Llethwedgwelvau*.[29] From this point by a crooked line up to a little mountain which looks like a fort on the right-hand side of *Llethwedgwellvau*. From this point along the height up to the top of *carrecereryr*.[30] From this point along the summit of the rocks up to *Gorssed Ressygynt*[31] as it overhangs the valley. From this point turning aside towards *Llyndinas* along the length of a sort of rocky arm appearing above the valley as far as the head of the dike *mein*. From this point along the centre of this dike up to the river *ferlas*, and from thence along the middle of the *ferlas* as far as *Abercolwyn* to the point where it flows into *Llynekemer*.[32]

[1] Gwascat onnos = Gwastad Onnos. [2] Bryn Gwynant. [3] Hafod Tangraig. [4] Cwm y Gwryd. [5] Ysgubor Dinas Emrys, now called Hafod y Porth. [6] Gwernlasdeg. [7] Llem = Cwmllan, and second Llem = river which runs through Cwmllan. [8] Cwm Merch. (Erth = river Erch or Merch.) [9] Cwm Dyli. [10] Cefn Trawsnant, near Gorphwysfa. [11] Gwryd. [12] Cae or Caeau (Cae Gwryd). [13] Degymm = Daugwm (Braich y Ddau Gwm is between Pen y Gwryd and Nant y Benglog). [14] Abercolwyn is the same as Bedd Gelert. [15] Ferlas seems, from this description, to have been the old name of the river that runs through the Vale of Gwynen below Llyn Dinas. [16] The land in the hollow by the source of the river Colwyn. [17] Bwlch Cwmllan. [18] Wyddfa Fawr, or the Snowdon Summit. [19] Probably a corrupt form of Wrysgan, a name now lost in the Snowdon district, though retained in the Moelwyn group. [20] Gorphwysfa Beris. [21] Moel Berfedd (between Gorphwysfa and Pen y

This charter shows how generous the powerful and successful Llewelyn was, and how full of thought he was concerning the spiritual welfare of the people whom he ruled. It may strike the reader as rather strange that this part of the Prince's dominions should be given to the Abbot of Aberconway, especially since we know that he was so favourably disposed towards the Priory of Bedd Gelert, but when certain facts are pointed out the matter is simplified. We shall deal with the question later on.

On the Old Mill Bridge.—We will start again by the village, and instead of asking the reader to follow us with his optical powers, as he stands on Craig y Llan, we shall ask him to follow us with both eye and foot.

The old Mill Bridge, on which we stand to take in the scenery of the first small valley in Nant Gwynen, was only a narrow bridge, just wide enough for a pack-horse to cross, up to about forty years ago. It was then widened by Mr. Searell, father of Mrs. Jones, Sygun Fawr, who had hitherto to take his horse and cart into the high-road through a ford above Tan y Rhiw. It is a strongly made old bridge, though not wrought with imperishable materials. It is a favourite object with painters, sketchers, and photographers. To our mind the bridge is associated with the story of Balaam and his ass, and in the story which thus connects the distant with the recent past, we have another proof of history repeating itself.

A fishmonger was one day trying to dispose of his "live fresh herrings" in the neighbourhood, and, having worked the village, he directed his steps up the Vale of Gwynen. Seeing several cottages on the other side of the river, and knowing

Gwryd). [22] Mymbyr. [23] Yr Afon Goch. [24] Llygad yr Ych. [25] Ceryg Argylch (probably the cromlech on Moel y Gysgfa). [26] Llech y Garn. [27] This name means the "prominence" or "hill of the stag," which we have failed to identify. [28] Teyrw was probably the old name of Afon Nanmor. [29] This word stands for Llechwedd y Gwylfäu (The Slope of the Watch Towers). [30] Ceryg yr Eryr, or Careg yr Eryr (The Stones or Rock of the Eagle). [31] Gorseddau'r Sygun. [32] Llyn Cymer, the pool formed at the confluence of the rivers Colwyn and Gwynen. The other names are either well known or not known at all, and as we cannot correct the spelling nor identify the places, we leave them without a comment.

that the bridge led to Sygun Fawr farm, he thought he would try his luck across the bridge. His fish were carried in panniers on the back of a friendly donkey, so he tried to lead his beast of burden across the bridge. To his great annoyance, the donkey would not go with him over the river on any account, and after pulling by the bridle and beating him severely, the donkey was still firm. A man who chanced to pass by was asked to be good enough to give a helping hand, which he did with every readiness, and pushed behind the donkey as hard as ever he could, but without the slightest

(*Drawing by S. M. Jones.*) The Old Mill Bridge.

success. Another man came up and joined the other in pushing, while the owner pulled as hard as he could at the bridle, but the donkey would brook no coercion. So when the fishmonger saw it was useless trying to get his asinine servant over the bridge, he turned to the men and said, "Never mind; perhaps he is right after all; I might not sell a herring if I did get across."

The road across the bridge leads to a few cottages and the farm of Sygun Fawr, which is hidden from view by a wooded hillock just above cottage number two. This farm is the property of its occupier, Mr. William Jones, who is not

only a diligent farmer, but an enlightened writer on the history and movements of his district. It is only natural that the occupier of Sygun Fawr should be interested in literature, since it is only so that he can be true to the traditions of his home. Welsh literature still contains traces of the poetic gifts of some of the Griffiths who lived here in the seventeenth century. There is in existence an elegy after "Gruffydd ab Robert Gruffydd, of Sygun," dated 1644, and another, composed on behalf of a relative, to "Gruffydd Roberts, of Sygun," dated 1699. The former was written by John Gruffydd, Llanddyfnan, and the latter by a certain John Prichard. This shows that Sygun Fawr is identified with Welsh literature.

There is an old oak cupboard in the sitting-room, on the left-hand side as we enter the house, on which is carved $\frac{R.\ G.}{K.}$ 1626. It doubtless belonged in the first instance to the Robert Gruffydd above mentioned, as being the father of Gruffydd, who died in 1644, and Kate, his wife. The cupboard has never been from Sygun, and is looked upon as a fixture. A clockmaker once lived here, and his name may still be seen on the face of some very old clocks in the parish. He left it for his long resting-place in 1784. A manager of some of the copper mines of the neighbourhood lived here from 1840-56, when Mr. John Lobb—for that was his name—passed away, and was succeeded by Mr. Henry M'Kellar, Sheriff of Carnarvon for 1861-62, and who was succeeded by the late Mr. Searell.

It was once one of the mansions of the district, and a beautiful spot for a mansion it is. It stands facing an Alpine group of hills, on a beautiful elevation not far from a lively stream, and within a very short distance of the village. We can scarcely imagine a more delightful spot for a summer holiday, and the Rev. W. J. Dawson, who has as good an eye as one would wish for natural scenery, speaks of the spot from experience as being truly delightful.

Casting our eyes to the left of the high-road, we can see from the bridge a high hill called Dinas y Frân. Some say that it was once crowned with a fort, but to-day there is not

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even a trace of its ruins. The hill is well adapted for a fort, though it is quite possible that there never was a structure on it, being merely a natural fort placed under garrison. It is immediately above the houses.

The row of houses on the same side of the road, and right under this hill, is called Tre Ddafydd (David's Town), and sometimes Tan y Rhiw, after a little cottage that once stood a little way beyond, where we find an old ruin, almost on the turning of the road. The two houses a few yards farther on are built on the spot, where once stood a round house, and are included in Tre Ddafydd, or Tan y Rhiw.

Craflwyn.—The neatly-built little lodge to which we next come, guards the entrance into Craflwyn, the charming little mansion which stands below a sheltering plantation, at the foot of Cocyn Craflwyn. On the opposite side of the road from the lodge there once stood a house called "Yr Hen Dyrnpeg" (The Old Turnpike), which was the old toll house. The old house had served in its turn as a mill and as a factory, and it is more than likely that the successive tenants looked after the entrance gate of Craflwyn, before the luxury of a lodge was ever thought of.

Craflwyn stands some two hundred yards from the road, facing the east, or perhaps more correctly east-south-east. It was once the finest old palace in the Vale of Gwynen, and a portion of the old building is still preserved, encased within three different additions which have been made to it. This easily traced antique portion of the present Craflwyn measures 36 × 16 feet, internally, from wall to wall. It forms the second part of the fine hall of the house and the kitchen, together with the passage and staircase between the two. The old-fashioned fireplace of the kitchen has been bricked up, and made like modern kitchen fireplaces; but nothing has been destroyed, and the old fireplace and chimney could be easily restored, if it were necessary, by merely removing the additions. The walls of the old building are about three feet wide

The third addition brought the back part of the building into existence, and one cannot help wondering what possible notion the owner or architect had in his head when designing

the tower-like shape of this addition. Its roof looks like that of a pavilion in miniature. The fourth addition is rather extensive, and consists of the front of the house, together with the entrance at the northern end. Above the door is a stone bearing the inscription "A.D. 1873." In the hall we find the crest of the old Craflwyn family, represented by the Humphrey Jones whom we shall refer to presently.

After the dissolution of the monasteries, the first name we

The Craflwyn Crest.

have connected with it as proprietor is that of Meredydd ap Ieuan, Gwydir. This Meredydd's heir was John Wynn, who bequeathed his property to his son Maurice, who again made over his estate to his son John Wynn, the historian of the "Gwydir family." In his book, Sir John Wynn speaks of a certain Rys ap Robert who owned Vaynol, near Bangor, and who had to forsake his land and flee to Danhadog, because he had killed a man. He had two sons, whose names were Rytherch and Richard, and these Sir John Wynn calls "my

father's fosters." From this Richard ap Rys ap Robert was "descended Humphrey Jones of Cravelyn, gentleman," through his grandfather, Maurice Jones, and his father, John Jones. Humphrey Jones, Receiver-General of North Wales, bought Plas y Ddôl, Merionethshire, from Pierce Lloyd, Esq., and we find one of his descendants, probably grandson, living at the Ddôl in 1698, when he served as Sheriff of Merioneth.

This descendant's name was Morris (or Maurice) Jones, and he left no sons. He left his estate to his daughter, who married Mr. Richard Parry, Llanrhaiadr, whose name appears as Sheriff of Merioneth in 1771-72, and living at Plas y Ddôl, and the next year (1772-73) he acts as the appointed Sheriff of Carnarvonshire, as proprietor of Meillionen, in this parish. From him descended Richard Parry, Esq., Llwyn Ynn and Plas Newydd, who left his property to his daughters. How H. S. Parry, Esq., Stinsford House, Dorchester, came into the property, we cannot say; but by the sale of Craflwyn by him to the present owner and occupier, this old mansion and its traditions have passed from one family of Welsh blood to another of Scottish blood. G. P. Ferris Rudd, Esq., has been in possession for about three years, and is taking great pride in his new estate.

Mr. Rudd very kindly gave us every help in identifying the various parts of the old buildings, and impressed us as a gentleman who thoroughly appreciates the interesting antiquities connected with the house, and who would think twice before he would unnecessarily remove any of them. For even the old out-buildings of Craflwyn are interesting.

CHAPTER XV

NANT GWYNEN—DINAS EMRYS

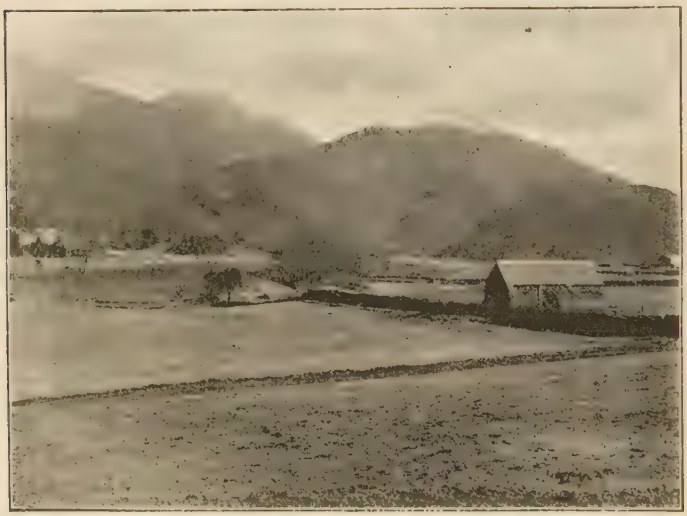
Its Appearance and Position.—After passing Craflwyn about the length of a couple of fields, we see, right in front of us, a high hill rising far above the hay-fields that surround it. From

a little distance it seems as if it entirely closed in the valley, leaving only narrow passes on the ridges, on each side. But after drawing near, one finds a wide space between it and the Sygun Mountain, through which the road and the river pass. It is of a round shape, and not unhappily compared to a man's hat, minus the brim; its sides are steep and rugged, but not bare. Almost every projecting stone is clothed with a short yellow-green grass, and a growth of hazel and dwarf oak-trees completely encircle it; so that nature has made of it one of the most beautiful hills in the district.

Dinas Emrys from the Mill Bridge (Siabod in the Distance).

This hill is Dinas Emrys, which almost every *Guide-Book* mentions, and which hardly a stranger identifies. Even the representatives of large photographic establishments, who visit the district in order to provide views for delighted tourists, have contrived to miss it. Quite apart from its historic connections, it is the prettiest little hill in Nant Gwynen. But when we find that this was once the scene of some of the best-known facts in British history—the marvellous deeds of the prophet Myrddin Emrys, and the attempts of the arch-traitor Vortigern to shield himself from his wantonly wronged and madly enraged subjects—it becomes of absorbing interest.

Its Entrance and Summit.—The main entrance of the fort was on the northern side of the hill, and the cuttings which were made in the rocks, on that side, remain to this day. There was another entrance on the western side, which was far more difficult, and was meant for those on foot rather than those on horseback. This was the way we took the first time we climbed it. After mounting about half-way up, we may see, on close examination, the ruins of an old wall of great strength,



Craflwyn. Cwm Bleiddiaid. Dinas Emrys.

which runs right along this side. It reaches from a steep rock on the southern side to a similar rock on the northern ridge. On the upper side of this lies a fairly level patch of ground, where, we presume, the garrison stood. A little higher up we come across the ruins of another wall of much greater strength than the first, but which runs almost parallel with it. Just above this again we come to the main wall, which encircled the crown of the hill, following the edge of the rock at every point. Nature is gradually covering over these

traces, and the leisureless observer may fail to find them at all.

On the southern side the fort was quite inaccessible except at one point, and even this was strongly protected by three successive walls, as on the western side. The name of that point is "Merica," the derivation of which is unknown to us. The simplest explanation is that it is an abbreviation of "America," but why it was so called is a mystery. It is a dent made in the rock by the water trickling from the well above. The northern side was also fortified by nature by means of the steepness of the rocks; yet the main entrance was on that side. The way up to the fort came from a north-eastern direction, and then climbed the northern side by a sloping path. This path had to be cut right through the side of a steep, projecting rock, immediately under the wall of the summit.

Within this summit wall are the ruins of an old tower, on the eastern side of the enclosure. It is of a quadrilateral shape, and measures 36 feet by 24. This was a firm and well-made structure; its walls were as smooth as those of a modern house, and must have been built by skilled artisans, who knew how to use the plumb-line. No lime and but little clay was used, and the walls are at least $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide. It is in a very bad state of preservation, and some one has been here, not very long ago, developing the size of his bump of destruction. Below the ruins of this tower is the steepest side of the Dinas. This side was also defended by a strong wall, which was worked on, and into, the living rock. The wall of the tower and this wall were parallel. Right under us, as we stand on the old tower ruins looking towards Craig y Llan, lies a piece of ground sacred to the memory of Myrddin. It is a sheltered basin, near the centre of which rests a small heap of stones. When the moisture and heat of early summer have urged the rushes and bracken to assert themselves, the stones may have to be searched for; they are there neverthe less, and mark the spot where a well of water was once ceaselessly bubbling. This was Myrddin's Well. Around it runs a circle, not unlike the ruins of a wall, which measures

more than 30 feet in diameter. This was a mystic circle, within which the dragons of King Lludd were hidden; for down deep below the surface was the lake of which we shall speak later on.

There can be no doubt that this was a British fort, because it contains similar features to other old forts in these districts, such as Tre'r Ceiri, on the Eifl Mountains; Dinas, by Penmaen Mawr; and Caer Seon, near Conway, etc., all of which were made of loose stones, on hill-tops, and being secured by regular ramparts and fosses.

Its Name.—The first name that was given to this fortification was "Dinas Ffaraon," the meaning of which is "The Fort or City of the Higher Powers." This name enables us to assume that it was a place of great importance and distinction, and that it was connected with religion at some period prior to its occupation as a military stronghold. The nature of that religion cannot be definitely determined, as we have no direct reference to it in any old legends or records, as such. Its name was changed to Dinas Emrys long after it was turned into a military stronghold by Elen, the wife of Clemens Maximus, or Maxen Wledig, and as having been made renowned by Myrddin Emrys—the Merlin Ambrosius of the old Latin records.

The following legends are connected with the place under its first name, and the first which we shall relate is thought to refer to it as a place of religious import.

The Sow of Dallwaran Dallben.—Dallwaran Dallben, in the vale of Dallwyr, in Cornwall, had a sow, which was called Henwen, and which was under the charge of Coll ab Collfrewi. "The sow was big with young, and as it had been prophesied that the Isle of Britain would be injured by her progeny, Arthur collected the forces of the country and went forth to destroy it. The sow in the meantime, being about to farrow, proceeded as far as the promontory of Penwedig, or Land's End, in Cornwall, where she put to sea. She next landed at Aber Tarogi, in Gwent, Coll having hold of her bristles and following wherever she wandered, whether by land or sea. At Wheatfield, in Gwent, she laid three grains

of wheat and three bees; hence Gwent has been famous ever since for the best wheat and honey. From Gwent she went to Dyfed, where she laid a grain of barley and a pig; and from that time the barley and swine of Dyfed are proverbial. After this she proceeded to Arvon, and in Lleyn she laid a grain of rye, since which time the best rye is produced in Lleyn and Eifionydd. Proceeding thence to the cliff of Cyferthwch,[1] in Snowdon, she laid the cub of a wolf and an eaglet. Coll gave the eaglet to *Brynach Wyddel of Dinas Affaraon*, and the wolf he gave to Menwaed, lord of Arllechwedd. These were the wolf of Menwaed and the eagle of Brynach, which in after times became so famous. From hence the sow went to the black stone in Arvon, under which she laid a kitten, which Coll threw into the Menai. The sons of Palug, in Mona, took it up, and nursed it up, to their own injury. This became the celebrated Palug cat, one of the three chief molesters of Mona."

Coll ab Collfrewi is described as the nephew and disciple of Rhuddlwm Gawr, or the bony Red Giant, as the name denotes, who, in all probability, was a Phœnician (?) merchant, and his religious system was expressed in the character of a sow. Davies's *Mythology of the British Druids* deals at length with these matters, and the reader is referred to that work if he has any desire to know more of sow worship. Our purpose in quoting is to give the reader an opportunity of using his own judgment, as to the evidence in the above story regarding the connection of Dinas Ffaraon with Druidic religion.

The Sow and Local Place-Names.—It may not be amiss to quote the following speculation, made by an able antiquarian, with regard to the evidence which place-names give of the existence of sow worship in this district long ago. It is based, as will be seen, on Davies's system.

"About eight hundred years before Christ, the ancient Britons worshipped an 'unknown God' under the Phœnician name 'Hwch' ('Sow'); and the number of place-names within this parish connected with 'Hwch' and 'Moch' ('Pigs'), such as Llwyn yr Hwch, Dinas Moch, Cae'r Moch, etc.,

[1] Near Craflwyn.

makes it reasonable to assume that the above-named religion was the religion of the district, and that there was a particular place where such a god was worshipped. The ancient name of the fort—*Affaraon*—proves that this was that particular place. There are many other things also which show that this fort was once a place of that kind. One thing is the artificial mound which stood between this hill and Llyn Dinas, on the other side of the river, and part of which still remains, on which several of the ceremonies belonging to that religion were performed. There used to be a large stone on the top of this mound many years ago, which was probably the altar on which sacrifices were made during the solemn feasts."

We will quote later on a description of one of the ceremonies given as an instance. It is quite probable that many a reader will shake his head at the theory of the painstaking antiquarian, the late Rev. Owen Jones, Llandudno. The theory, nevertheless, is ingenious and well put, and seems admirably to the point.

Lludd and Llefelys.—The following legend, or romance, is slightly abbreviated, and is sometimes called the Story of the Dragons.

"In the time of Lludd ab Beli ab Manogan, there fell upon the Isle of Britain three plagues, such as none had ever seen the like of before. The first was a certain race that came hither, by the name of Coranians, whose knowledge was so great that no remark could be uttered, if the wind caught it, which they did not know. The second was a certain shrill cry which was uttered every May eve above every hearth in the Isle of Britain; and this went through the hearts of men and beasts, so that the men lost their colour and strength, the women were greatly terrified, the young men and maidens lost their reasons, and the animals, trees, and lands became barren. The third was that however much food and provisions were stored in the King's palace, and all the other palaces in the Isle of Britain, even if it were the store of a whole year, none but what was eaten on the first night could ever be accounted for.

"The first plague was evident and clear to all; but of the other two plagues there was no one that knew their meaning.

Then was King Lludd grieved and sorely vexed that such plagues had come upon the Isle of Britain. By the common counsel of his nobles, he went to his brother Llefelys (who was King of France) to ask his advice, for he was a man of wisdom and judgment. When Lludd had explained to his brother the meaning of his errand, they agreed upon a plan to converse together in such a way that the wind might not catch their words, nor the Coranians find out their secret. Then Llefelys caused a long horn to be made so that they may speak through it, and so they conversed through this horn. But neither of them could hear from the other anything but exceedingly bitter words. Llefelys perceived that the devil had gone into the horn, so he caused it to be washed with wine. Then were their words conveyed correctly. So Llefelys told his brother that he would give him some insects, bidding him chop them up into a vessel full of water when he returned home, and call together to him everybody, without any difference, Britons, Coranians, and all his kingdom, and then cast that water over all alike; and he affirmed that all the Coranians would die, but that the Britons would receive no harm.

"'The second plague,' said Llefelys, 'is the dragon of thine own people and the dragon of a foreign nation, which fights with it every May eve, and seeks to overcome it. Consequently, when your dragon sees the other getting the better of the struggle, from real anger and rage it gives forth that terrible shriek. Thou mayest know this matter thus. Cause the length and the breadth of the Island to be measured, and wherever its centre is found, cause a pit to be dug there, and in the pit place the largest caldron that thou canst find. Then fill it with the very best mead, and place a covering of silk on the face of the caldron, and remain there thyself to watch. It shall be that thou wilt see the dragons fighting fiercely in the air, and casting flaming fire the one at the other. And when they come to the very centre point of the Island, the one will not seek to avoid the other, and then will follow the fiercest fight between them. At last, being quite worn out with fighting, they will fall in the form of two pigs upon the covering. When they have smelt the odour of the mead and tasted it,

they will set to and drink it, and will drag the covering with them to the bottom of the caldron, and will then fall asleep. Then wrap thou the covering round them and go and bury them in the earth, within a rock, in the strongest and wildest place in the Island; and while they remain there no foreign plague will harass the Isle of Britain.'

"'The third plague is the mighty man of ghostly form, who steals thy food and drink, by deeds of magic, and who makes every one sleep while he is doing so. Therefore it is necessary for thee in thine own person to keep watch over thy stores and provisions; and for fear sleep may overcome thee, cause a caldron of cold water to be placed near at hand, and when sleep overcomes thee, step into the caldron.'

"When they had finished consulting together, Lludd returned home, and forthwith summoned the whole Island together; and after cutting up the insects into the water, he cast it upon them all, as his brother had bade him. All the Coranians died on the spot, while not a single one of the Britons was even injured. Then after a while Lludd caused the Island to be measured lengthwise and crosswise, and it was at Oxford he found the centre. There he caused a pit to be dug, into which he also caused the caldron of mead to be placed, and a covering of silk to be laid over it; and he himself watched for that night. As he was thus watching, he saw the dragons fighting. After becoming tired and exhausted they fell into the caldron, and when they had drunk the mead, they slept. While they thus slept, Lludd wrapt the covering about them, and went and covered them in a stone chest, and buried them safely deep down in the earth, in the most secure spot he could find—in Dinas Emrys in Snowdonia, before that called Dinas Ffaraon,—and thus was the shrill cry heard no more.

"Then the king caused a great feast to be spread; and when it was ready, he caused a caldronful of cold water to be placed close by; and he personally kept watch. As he watched far into the night, he heard several songs of various kinds trying to allure him to sleep. He, for fear he may be overcome by sleep, and lest his arrangements may be frustrated, frequently dipped himself in the cold water. At last

he saw a man of an immense size, clad in strong heavy armour, come into the room with a basket; and, as was his wont, he placed all the food and drink prepared into the basket, and proceeded to take them away. But when Lludd saw this he sprang after him, and vehemently called upon him to stop, crying after him thus: 'Stop, stop,' said he, 'thou hast insulted and robbed me long enough; thou shalt not go this time unless thou hast more strength and prowess in arms than I have.' He immediately placed the basket on the floor, and waited for the king to make up to him. Then followed a fierce fight and contest; blows were exchanged, and fire flashed from their swords and other armour. When they had worn out their arms, they doggedly and savagely grappled with one another. At last the fate that foresaw gave the verdict, and the king got the victory as he hurled his plague-bringer to the earth. When he was conquered by force and might, he pleaded for mercy, and the king answered him, 'How can I give thee mercy, when thou hast inflicted so much loss and injury on me?' He answered him thus, 'Every loss that I have ever caused thee, I will make good to thee in full; and I will never do the same again, and will also serve thee henceforth as a faithful servant.' The king accepted his promise. Thus did Lludd free his kingdom from the three plagues; and ever after, up to the day of his death, he reigned in peace and happiness."

This myth has been published in the same collection of Welsh legends as the *Mabinogion*, and has special interest in connection with Dinas Emrys, especially that part of it which refers to the contest of the dragons.

Irish Chiefs at Dinas Emrys.—We read in old Welsh legends[1] of Don, king of Lochlyn and Dublin, leading the first batch of Irish into Gwynedd (Venedotia) in 267 A.D.; and of his son Gwydion securing, by stratagem or fraud, dominion over Anglesey, Arvon, and the Cantred, by bribing the Romans to rob the Welsh for his benefit. This piece of cunning is ranked in the Triads as one of the three vicious tricks played with the Island of Britain. "The first was the

[1] *Iolo MSS.*, pp. 42, 43.

Stratagem of Urb Lluyddawg of Lochlyn, who took away every man that could fight and bear arms from the Isle of Britain, and led them to destruction in the land of the Dead Sea. The second was the Stratagem of Morien, by whom the Isle of Britain was deprived of Baptism and Sacrifice, and who caused all the people of the Island to become unbaptized Jews. The third Stratagem was that of Gwydion ab Don, in Gwynedd, who secured by fraud, dominion and power over Anglesey, Arvon, and the Cantred, from the Roman Emperor."

The legends still further inform us that the Irish held sway for a hundred and twenty-nine years, until they were entirely conquered by Caswallon Law Hir ("The Long-Armed") sometime during the fifth century. Several traditions are current relating to these Irishmen, but since the vivid imagination of the Middle Ages has so extensively added to them, and clothed them so completely with legendary matter, it is difficult, if not impossible, to make any historical use of them. Every tradition is based on some truth, and one does not wish to be reckoned among the people who scoff at all traditions that may be exaggerated, nor among the antiquarians who believe everything. The mediæval mind was a free mind—free from the fetters which exact knowledge of facts puts on, free from the limitations which the perception of the definite imposes; hence its wilder, more poetic, and creative nature. Nations made saints of tyrannical priests, and gods of warlike heroes, attributing to them supernatural deeds and powers. But this does not justify the present age in denying that they ever existed; it is nothing short of folly. One cannot but feel a kind of compassion for the man who fails to believe that Arthur and Myrddin ever existed, simply because they have been half-deified by the creative and poetic imagination of the writers of the Mabinogion.

Gwydion ab Don.—Several of these Irish chiefs enjoy the reputation of having been men of ability and learning; but because their excellences and virtues have been so much magnified by the vivid and inventive genius of the older writers, many esteem them as nothing more than the creations of fiction. No better example of this class of so-called

mythical characters can be mentioned than Gwydion ab Don. He was "highly celebrated for knowledge and sciences. He was the first who taught the Cambro-Britons to perform the plays of Illusion and Phantasm, and introduced the knowledge of letters to Ireland and Lochlyn."[1] He was an excellent astronomer, and is placed in the Triads with Gwyn ab Nudd and Idris, as one of the three Master Astronomers of the Isle of Britain. He has given his name to one of the constellations, and the Welsh for Milky Way is Caer Gwydion ("The City of Gwydion").

Legend makes him a semi-spiritual being, running through the heavens in search of a fair damsel who had eloped with Goronwy Befr, and leaving a distinct trace of his path in the sky, which every one knows as the Milky Way.

Brynach Wyddel.—Among the Irish chiefs who made Dinas Emrys their place of habitation was one Brynach or Eurnach Hen, who was in power in the time of Maxen Wledig. These Irish tribes were a heavy plague upon the Britons, who endeavoured to drive them out, under the leadership of Owen Finddu ("Owen the Black-Lipped"), the son of Maxen Wledig. His non-success is recorded in the following passage:—"Brynach Wyddel was king of Gwynedd, comprising the Isle of Man, Mona, and Arvon; and he was the first king of those countries who received the Christian Faith. He was converted and baptized by St. Rhidian of Gower and Rheged,[2] and made the first Christian churches in North Wales, inculcating in them faith and baptism among the Cambro-Britons and Irish of his kingdom. He lived in the time of the Emperor Maximus, and fought with Owen Finddu, the son of Maximus, for the government of Gwynedd, comprising Maw, Mona, Arvon, and the Cantred, and they mutually killed each other. The conflict took place in the city of Ffaraon, where the blood remains visible on the stones to this very day."

Maxen Wledig.—In order to make the story of the contest between Brynach and Owen Finddu more connected, a few facts about the career of Maxen Wledig may be useful.

[1] Probably some part of Scandinavia bordering on the Baltic Sea.

[2] A district lying between the Tawy and the Towy.

According to Gibbon, Maxen Wledig (or Clemens Maximus) was a native of Spain, though some will have it that he was born in Britain. He was, however, the commander of the Roman forces in Britain in the time of the Emperor Gratian. Gratian had roused his resentment by handing over the empire of the East to Theodosius, "a name celebrated in history, and dear to the Catholic Church," retaining for himself the Western Empire. After a time the Emperor of the West was one day surprised by the news that Maximus was marching against him with British forces, who had compelled him to revolt against his master and "to accept the dangerous present of the Imperial purple." The Emperor went forth to meet his unfaithful deputy, and the forces met in the neighbourhood of Paris; but such was the defection among his own soldiers that Gratian's standard was no sooner displayed than they abandoned it. Gratian fled, but was overtaken at Lyons by "Andragathius, the General of the cavalry of Maximus," and executed. Thus did Maximus secure for himself in 383 A.D. the western countries of Spain, Gaul, and Britain. With this he was not satisfied, because young Valentinian was in possession of Italy, and so would ever be a source of danger to him. He marched against Italy, and Justinia fled with the young ruler and his sister, and implored the protection and help of Theodosius. The Emperor of the East was won over to her cause by the charms of Valentinian's sister, whom he married. He then marched against Maximus, secured an easy victory over him, and handed him to his soldiers, who immediately put an end to him by severing his head from his body. This happened in 388 A.D.

The Welsh accounts say that he married Elen,[1] the daughter of Eudaf of Segontium, whose brothers Adeon and Kynan levied large armies to aid him in his enterprise, and that she gave him three sons—Peblig, Constantine, and Owen.

Owen Finddu.—After his father's death, Owen was elected commander of the Welsh forces by a national convention, and soon gave new life to the national aspirations of his fellow-countrymen.

[1] See Chapter X. pp. 143-46.

Britain was restored to a state of independence, and the annual tribute which had been paid to the Romans, since the days of Julius Cæsar, was discontinued. The following Triad refers to him :—

The Three Monarchs of the Isle of Britain chosen by a National Convention :—(1) Caswallon ab Lludd ab Beli ab Mynogan ; (2) Caradog ab Bran ab Llyr Llediaith ; (3) Owen ab Maxen Wledig ; that is, through the election of a convention (or jury) of the country and nation, though they were not elders.

He was killed towards the end of the fourth century, not long before the Roman troops were withdrawn. He was buried near Dinas Emrys, and his grave was in existence not very long ago. Rhys Goch Eryri refers to his grave in his *Cywydd Cyfrinach* in the original of the following lines :—

Where lies the head of the brother
Of Constantine the Blessed, swift blade of battle ;
In the festival of oaks, his angelic cheeks
Are hidden in the wood of Pharaon.
ELVET, *trans.*

Owen and the Giant.—The memory of the battle or contest between Eurnach and Owen is still preserved by local tradition. The story is related something as follows :—

Once in the olden times, when giants lived in this Island, a very notable giant dwelt at Dinas Emrys ; his reputation for strength and size had spread throughout the whole country. One day another giant, by the name of Owen, who had heard of the prodigious strength of the Dinas giant, came to try his powers. They went down to a field called "Cae Ysgubor," and began the contest by "pulling the torques." After striving long, and breaking wood as thick as the beams of a house as easily as if they were withered twigs, neither was able to claim the victory. Then Owen saw, on a little hill beyond the river, a huge boulder, and, with a hop, skip, and a jump, went over to where it was. He took hold of it, and hurled it to the very feet of the giant. The giant picked it up, and threw it right back to the very place from which it had come. So the victory belonged to neither in this case again. Next they went to wrestle, and as Owen was unable to throw the giant, he lost

his temper, and putting his foot under him, he tripped him until he fell on his back against a stone. The stone was crushed to fragments by his weight, and a piece of it entered his back and killed him. He, however, kept his hold of his opponent, and in his dying pains, he squeezed Owen with such force, that he also died. Owen was buried on that spot, and the giant was buried on the ridge where the big stone lay, and the stone was placed over his grave. There is an out-house on the right-hand side of the approach to Hafod y Porth, which is called Beudy Bedd Owen ("The Cow-House of Owen's Grave"), and people remember seeing an immense stone on the hillock beyond the river, which was called "Maen y Cawr" ("The Giant's Stones"). It was broken up to construct the dam for carrying water to the copper mill below.

Edward Llwyd, of Oxford, gives a somewhat different version of the story, which is as follows:—"Between Dinas (Emrys) and the lake is the grave of Sir Owen ab Maxen, who had been fighting against the giant with steel balls. There are depressions in the ground, where each stood, to be seen still. Others say that it is with arrows they fought, and that the depressions now seen were places dug by them to defend themselves. Neither of them, however, got over the affair. When the knight perceived that there was no hope of his living much longer, he was asked where he wished to be buried; he requested that an arrow should be shot skyward, and where it fell, that they should make his grave there."[1]

We will return to the hillock again, and will proceed at present to give the later history of Dinas Emrys.

Vortigern.—The departure of the Roman forces from Britain, at the beginning of the fifth century, gave rise to general confusion and anarchy throughout the land. The selfish policy of that enterprising people, and their degrading system of fortifying and defending their colonies in foreign countries with mercenary soldiers from among other peoples, had brought hosts of different tribes and adventurers into the country during their supremacy, ultimately to settle down here. These, when their masters were gone, elected chiefs from

[1] *Cambrian Journal*, 1859, p. 214.

among themselves, and began to attack and harass the natives on all hands, so that they had to send to the Roman Emperor for help to drive them back. But as the Romans had as much as they could do to defend themselves against internal and external foes, the Britons got no help from that quarter.

In their dire circumstances they sent word to their brethren in Armorica (or Brittany); and Aldor, King of Armorica, sent his brother Constantine with 2000 men to their aid. He completely routed the revolting aliens, and the people rewarded his success by electing him to the sovereignty of Britain. This was about the year 433 A.D. He reigned successfully for twelve years, and was then assassinated by a Pict. He left three sons, which were called Constans, Emrys, and Uthyr. The first-named was a timid and weak-minded monk, and totally unfit to rule during those troublous times. The other two were but young lads, so that they were made useless for the leadership by their very youthfulness.

At this time there lived a distinguished nobleman in Goronwy Castle, in Ergyng, on the Wye, whose name was Gwrtheyrn Gwrthenau, and who had been at one time, it is said, an officer in the Roman army. According to the Welsh Bruts (or Chronicles) he was one of the most influential persons in the British council, and it was he who persuaded them to elect the weak-minded Constans as sovereign. He took him from the monastery of Amphibalus, at Winchester, where he had betaken himself, and placed him on the throne. In this way he secured for himself the complete power of control as self-appointed Prime Minister. This is the Vortigern of English history.

This man was aspiring for the sovereignty for himself, and when he had prepared the way for seizing the throne by sending Emrys and Uthyr into exile, he hired Picts to secretly murder Constans, and usurped the throne. Being an old Roman officer, he was well acquainted with the Roman system of hiring mercenaries for military purposes; and knowing that the voice of the people was against him, he hired the Saxons as his soldiers. These Saxons had probably

been brought into the country as Roman mercenaries. An additional host of the Saxons soon entered the country, and joined the others in his service. Their leader made a great feast, and Vortigern so greatly honoured him, that he gave his presence there.

Vortigern and Rhonwen.—This leader, Hengist, had a charming and wily daughter, named Rhonwen, serving at the table where the king was seated at the feast, with whom Vortigern fell madly in love; and although his own wife was living, and although he had had several children by her, he married Rhonwen and bestowed upon her the earldom of Kent. This unchaste connection strengthened his friendship with the foreigners, and they sent for their friends and relations to come over to them. They continued to pour in, and the king continued to grant them fresh lands for settling in. This unpatriotic conduct of the king roused the anger of the Britons, and they rose up in revolt against him, under the leadership of his own sons, Vortimer and Kentigern. He was driven from his throne, and compelled to flee for his life; then the Britons made Vortimer king in his stead. Vortimer defeated the Saxons in several engagements, and drove them back to their own country. But his stepmother, Rhonwen, removed him from his throne by hiring one to poison him.

After the death of Vortimer in 468 A.D., Vortigern seized the throne the second time, and soon began to invite his old friends back to this Island, on condition that Hengist would not bring more than 500 followers with him. But after once getting an excuse for coming over at all, the Saxon host began to steadily pour in. The brother of Hengist landed in Scotland with 300 ships filled with men. The Britons immediately took up arms to oppose them; but through an understanding between Vortigern and Hengist, it was agreed to hold a general council of all the nobles of both sides.

The Treachery of the Long Knives.—The council of the nobles was convened at Stonehenge, on the plain of Salisbury, and the majority of the best men of the kingdom attended. On the sixth day a sumptuous feast was prepared for the British nobles by Hengist, at the end of which was perpetrated one

of the most horrible massacres in the history of nations, being surpassed by the Massacre of St. Bartholomew alone. This is known in Welsh history as "Brâd y Cyllyll Hirion" (or "The Treachery of the Long Knives"). Hengist had arranged that in order to promote the interests of peace, every one should come unarmed. But he told his own men to provide themselves with long knives, to be kept in readiness in their sleeves. In the feast he placed the nobles to sit Briton and Saxon alternately, and when the mead and wine had been well drunk, he gave the signal, and each Saxon struck at the Briton next to him on his right. Over three hundred British nobles were thus destroyed at a blow, and only two escaped—the earl of Gloucester and King Vortigern. The former laid hold of a beam which he found close by, and fought his way, killing, by his great strength, a large number of the traitors; the latter was spared as designed, and was made prisoner by Hengist. For his release he gave the Saxons the richest provinces in the whole country—Essex, Sussex, and Middlesex.

This event was the end of the pompous sway of this faithless king, because this terrible massacre enraged the country against him, so that he had to flee for his life. He took up his abode in one of his castles called Gwrthrynion, or Goronwy. When Emrys, who was an exile in Brittany, heard how things were going on in Britain, he immediately crossed over with a strong force to attack Vortigern. After unsuccessfully besieging Goronwy Castle, he set fire to it, and, thinking probably that Vortigern had perished in the flames, Emrys went and attacked the Saxons in England. But it seems that when Vortigern and his courtiers heard that Emrys had landed in Britain, they secretly left the castle, and came to a wilder and more secluded spot, to the city of Ffaraon.

A Mysterious Prophet.—Vortigern's fears and timidity prompted him to strengthen his place of retreat, and he caused a strong castle to be built on the summit of Dinas Emrys; but, as the *Brut* puts it, "What work was done during the day, was swallowed up by the earth or thrown down during the night." When the work had thus been thrown down

three times, Vortigern summoned his magicians together to consult about the strange phenomenon. They told him that if he could find a lad who had never had a father, so that he might get his blood to sprinkle over the materials, and mix with the mortar, the building would stand, but that otherwise the building would never stand. So Vortigern sent messengers throughout the land in search of such a lad. When they had gone as far as Carmarthen, they heard two lads quarrelling in the street; and one of them was twitting the other of being a boy born without a father. The messengers took up the words of reproach, and questioned the spectators with regard to the boy so twitted, and asked if it were true that he had no father. They all confirmed its truth, and added that his mother was a pious nun, who was at that very time ministering before God in the Priory of St. Peter, Carmarthen. Then the messengers took the lad, who was called Myrddin, to Vortigern at Dinas Ffaraon.

When the boy was brought before the king in this arbitrary way, he asked him why he had been brought there. Vortigern explained to him that he had been sent for in order to be killed, so as to get his blood to mix up with the mortar of the new building which he was constructing, so that it might stand, according to the advice of the magicians. Myrddin replied that the magicians had given him that foolish advice in order to conceal their ignorance, and requested that the king should permit him to question them with reference to the place. They were summoned together, and Myrddin questioned them minutely about the building, and about the place on which it was being constructed, but they could give him no information.

Digging for the Dragons.—When Myrddin had thus exposed the ignorance and artfulness of the magicians, he told Vortigern that if his men were to dig down below the foundation they would come across a pool of water, in which a cist-faen (or stone chest) was hidden, containing two sleeping dragons, which fought fiercely whenever they woke up, and that it was the agitation which they made in fighting that caused the walls to fall down. Vortigern commanded them

to dig as Myrddin had directed, and the pool of water was found. He then bade his men dry up the pool, but they failed. Then Myrddin applied his art, and caused the water to run out in five different streams; the cist-faen was discovered and the dragons were found sleeping inside, as Myrddin had said. One was red and the other was white, and while Vortigern and his courtiers were looking and marvelling, the dragons woke up and began to fight furiously. The white seemed stronger than the red one, and drove it three times to the brink of the pool. But the red dragon pluckily strove again, and beat the white one right back to the brink of the pool. At last the white one fled, and was seen no more. Then Myrddin explained to them that the red dragon represented the British nation, and the white the Saxon nation; that the British nation, which was then being oppressed on all sides by the Saxons, would soon revive its strength for battle, and would at last drive the Saxons out of the country. He also prophesied a remarkable prophecy at this time, which may be seen in the *Brut*, but which has little connection with this place.

The reader will recognise the dragons as those hidden in this place by King Ludd, and may also see some remarkable connection between the legend and the events which were taking place at the time, and even with those which have taken place in the national struggles of Wales during later generations. During those of the fifteenth century the Welsh bards were making extensive use of the legend of the dragons, which they found in their *Bruts*.

The Death of the Magicians.—When Vortigern perceived the great wisdom of Myrddin, and the contemptible ignorance and deceit of the magicians, he became exasperated, and he commanded that all those who had advised him to get a fatherless boy's blood mixed with the mortar should be put to death. Their graves were dug in a neighbouring field, and could be seen as late as the early part of the present century, marked by stones. The field lies between Dinas Emrys and Craflwyn; and on a stone in the wall along the path that leads to Hafod y Porth the words "Beddau'r Dewiniaid"

("The Graves of the Magicians") have been roughly cut by Mr. Robert Evans, the retired blacksmith of the village. The stones marking the graves were removed by the tenant who then occupied Hafod y Porth, in order to prepare the ground for the plough.

Vortigern failed to complete his scheme of building a castle on Dinas Emrys, and so withdrew from the place, leaving it in the hands of Myrddin. There are two traditions as to his destination after his departure. One says that he took up his abode at Nant Gwrtheyrn ("Vortigern's Valley"), and the other says that he established himself at Craig Gwrtheyrn, in Carmarthenshire, which is situated about a mile and a half from New Quay Road Station, on the Manchester and Milford Railway, and about two miles from Llandyssul. It is to-day a mere small hill, with one exceedingly steep descent on the side next to the river. It has no clearly defined traces of ever having been a military station, but has several features which would recommend it for the use which Vortigern is said to have made of it.

Myrddin's Treasures.—Local tradition is content with leaving the story of the interval between Vortigern's departure, and that of Myrddin's, to pass into oblivion, but describes the manner of his leaving his famous stronghold in the following interesting way.

Myrddin remained in Dinas Emrys for some time, until he was joined by Aurelius Ambrosius, who induced him to go away with him. When they were about to set out, Myrddin placed all his treasures in a large golden vessel, hid the vessel and his golden chair in a cave in the city, and then rolled on the mouth of the cave a huge stone. He then covered the whole over with earth and green turf, so that no one could possibly come across it. It was his intention that this wealth should become the possession of some one in particular, belonging to a future generation. Tradition adds that the heir will be a golden-haired and blue-eyed stripling, and that when he draws nigh to Dinas Emrys, a bell will ring to invite him into the cave, which will open out, of its own accord, as soon as his foot touches it.

Many an amusing story is related in the district of people who have been searching for these treasures, and of the strange and marvellous things that have befallen them. A selection of some of the stories may not be uninteresting.

Searching for the Treasures.—Many years ago there lived, not far from Dinas Emrys, a young man who had newly been married. He belonged to the family of the "great treasures," as the saying goes, and had heard a great deal from his ancestors about the store of riches concealed in the Dinas. As he was just setting up in life, he was very anxious to get hold of some of these treasures, if he possibly could, so that he might give himself a good start in the world. One beautiful day in summer, he took with him his pickaxe and shovel, and climbed to the summit, bent on finding the immense riches hidden there before returning home. But he had no sooner commenced to dig in earnest on the top of the tower ruins than some terrible, unearthly noise began to rattle under his feet. The Dinas began to rock like a cradle, and ere long the sun was clouded over until it became pitch dark. Lightning flashes began to shoot their forked streaks around him, and pealing thunders to roar over his head. He unconsciously dropped his pickaxe from his hand, and hurried down helter-skelter through the darkness along the hollow called "Merica," to the pack-horse track below. By the time he had reached there everything was beautifully calm and serene, without as much as the slightest trace of the terrible storm that was raging on the Dinas, a few seconds previously. We need scarcely add that he never returned to fetch his tools.

Money jingling in the Well.—Another story tells us that when the servants of Hafod y Porth were haymaking, one clear sunny day on the Dinas, that one of them went to the well, and poked the bottom with the handle of his rake. On striking the rock he could hear a certain sound, like the sound of money jingling, distinctly. This made him impatiently eager to get at them, and he at once set about picking up some of the stones in the well. No sooner had he picked up one stone than a tremendous storm of wind and rain came howling round the summit, and every one rushed away with

all speed down the northern side of the hill. But by the time they had reached Maes yr Efail ("The Field of the Smithy") the sun was shining brightly, and not a drop of rain could be seen on a single blade of grass. This inspired the haymakers with so much awe and fear that not one of them would venture near the Dinas again during that year. Farmer Jones turned in the cattle to eat the mown hay, and whatever else they could find there, for all he cared.

The Heir Minus the Heart.—Some time about the middle of last century, there lived in the parish of Bedd Gelert a blue-eyed, golden-haired young man, who resembled in all points the description generally given of Myrddin's heir. This young man used to dream once every year that he could see a patriarchal-looking old man, with hair as white as snow, coming up to his bedside, and earnestly requesting him to get up and follow him to Dinas Emrys, where immense treasures had been awaiting him for generations. He could not, however, muster sufficient courage to follow the ghost, and although he saw identically the same vision year after year, he was lacking quite as much in courage and pluck the last year as he was the first he saw the apparition. So this respected old bachelor—for he was fortunately never married—got dream after dream, request after request, all pointing to the place where his possessions lay, but died without entering into his inheritance.

Young Hopeful and Dinas Bell.—The story of the strange dreams of the old bachelor had raised great hopes within the breasts of his relatives, that one of their kin would be the destined heir of the "great treasures." One of his sisters had a son, who was a tall, fine-looking young man, and the very image of his uncle. When a child he used to frequently hear of his uncle's strange dreams, and his boyish breast swelled with pride at the thought of his being one of the family of the "great treasures." When the child grew up to be a young man, and people continually told him that he was almost exactly like his uncle, he used to wish every night that he would get the same dream, and see the same vision, as his uncle. He was far from being timid; indeed, he seemed as if he had inherited

his uncle's share of courage in addition to his own. But with all his wishing, the dream never came.

One night, however, when passing the Dinas about midnight—the hour appointed for the rightful heir to enter into his inheritance,—when right opposite the middle of the hill, he thought he heard a bell ringing. He stopped, and he heard the bell ringing again. He became all ears, and, as he listened, he thought he could hear a voice calling, "Come here." Then the bell rang the third time, and, leaping over the wall, he went in the direction of the sound. Now the bell began to ring in real earnest, and to move on before him. He followed after the sound through the trees, in the dark, as far as Beudy Bedd Owen, then through the hazel copse to the top of the hill, and in a field called "Y Rofft," the ringing ceased. He then paused to listen for a few minutes, and the bell began to ring and move on again. Once more he followed after it, and at last he seemed to be drawing nearer and nearer to the sound—a fact which greatly strengthened his faith that he was at last being led to the treasures. The ringing ceased right under the ridge which is immediately behind Hafod y Porth, and he had no doubt but that the cave was quite near. He made straight for the ridge; but when he came up to the dark object in front of him, a black hand-fed calf gave a leap and darted by him, furiously rattling an old bell which hung by the cord around its neck. As he had never seen a calf carrying a bell, he immediately concluded that he had seen a ghost, and ran home as fast as his feet could carry him. He related his experience to his family, who, when they understood what the midnight bell-ringer was, made endless fun of his folly.

The treasures are still hidden in the secret cave, and a jealous spirit keeps a continual watch on behalf of the rightful heir. Knowing this, can any one wonder at people trembling in passing Dinas Emrys by night, or at their feeling a cold perspiration trickling down their foreheads as what in the day-time would be a wood-pigeon whirls by them, or an owl gives forth a mournful cry—each of which at night-time is a ghost, the guardian spirit of the treasures of Dinas Emrys?

CHAPTER XVI

NANT GWYNEN—MIDDLE PART

Hafod y Porth.—The old name for Hafod y Porth, as has been already mentioned in the note on the Charter, was "Ysgubor Dinas Emrys" ("The Barn of Dinas Emrys"). The word "Porth" refers to the entrance into the great fort, and "Hafod" means a summer house, where farmers lived during the haymaking season. The present building is an ordinary structure of somewhat recent date. The present tenant's family have farmed the land for far more than a century. Several things of interest belong to this farm, as one might expect from the fact that its land surrounds Dinas Emrys. For most of the information which we are able to give concerning the place, we are indebted to Mr. Jones, the present tenant, and his brother, Mr. Hugh Jones, who farmed the land for very many years, and only left it some nine years ago, after becoming unable to attend to its trying duties.

Maes yr Efail.—If we start from the road on the southern side of Dinas with the object of finding Maes yr Efail ("The Field of the Smithy"), we must cross over a couple of stone fences and enter the field south west of the hill. The old ruin on our right is the remains of an old out-house which a bachelor uncle of the Joneses built for feeding cattle. He was a cattle dealer, who took life rather easily, and lived with his brother's family at Hafod y Porth. His nephews remember him best as the owner of a fine old dog, which they used to take to chase the wild cats that made their haunts on Dinas Emrys. The field on which this ruin stands had once a thick cluster of oak-trees at its northern end, which was called Cell y Dewiniaid ("The Grove of the Magicians"), where Vortigern's wise men met to divine the great events of their times. The field beyond the little stream on the left is the field in which the magicians were buried, and at one time a

stone marked the place of each grave, and a white thorn bestrewed annually its falling blossoms around each resting-place.

The nephews have preserved a story told them by their uncle, the truth of which they have never doubted. He was one day trying to gather the goats to a pen beside his out-house, and experienced much trouble in getting them into the field where the pen was. After they got there, they darted off again towards the top of the Dinas. When he was running to try to prevent them, his foot alighted upon a stone, which sank under his weight. He stopped, and pressed down the same spot as he had trodden before, and one side of the stone sank down, while the other side revealed a hollow place below. He tried to raise it, but failed. A powerful draught of air seemed to be drawing the stone back into its place, so that he could not get his hand in under it. As the goats were hurrying up the slope, he pushed his stick into the ground, so that he might return to the stone again. When he did return the stick was gone, and a white thorn grew on the spot where he thought he had left it. He was told afterwards that if he had stuck his knife under the shifting stone, he would have been able to find it again; for the little creatures that play such tricks with mortal men never dare to approach steel or iron.

Leaving the first field, we come to another field; this is Maes yr Efail—so named because the little building at its far end was once a blacksmith's shop. Some think, without much reason, that it ought to be called Maes y Rhyfel ("The Battle-Field"). The building referred to is now used as a cow-house, but traces of the old smithy are still preserved at its upper end. The fireplace is there, under the steps leading up to the hay-loft, and the old paved yard in which the blacksmith shod horses, and did the heavier work of his trade. The most interesting thing about this old out-house is its rafters. We have already referred to the law,[1] which tradition says was passed in the time of Owen Glyndwr, prohibiting Welshmen from building houses higher than such as would

[1] See p. 12.

have their rafters reaching to the ground. This is the only perfect specimen of the houses which were built to avoid that silly piece of legislation. The projecting branches of the trees, from which the rafters have been made, reach nearly to the ground, and may be seen from inside, with the help of a match or a candle.

Pant yr Ychain.—The little house above Hafod y Porth is called Pant yr Ychain ("The Oxen's Dingle"), because the spot upon which it is built was once enclosed, as a convenient place to turn in over night the oxen in harness, before horses were used for farming purposes. There is a bog a little way above this, from which the Hafod y Porth family have dug some scores of tons of huge stumps of trees, which they have used for fuel along with the peat. Among the old stumps they used to get some peculiar kind of wood, which, when burnt, would give a bright, clear, and smokeless flame, and emit a most pleasant smell.

Taking the cart-road that leads up to the mountain, we come, after about fifteen minutes' walk, to an old copper works, which has left the mountain like a network. The large house, once occupied by the steward, and "barracks" used during the week by the workmen, protest against being useless, by crumbling away.

Beudy Bedd Owen.—Returning from the mountain, and passing the farmhouse on our way to the road, we come to Beudy Bedd Owen ("The Cow-house of Owen's Grave") on the left-hand side of the by-road. It is a very old building, partly rebuilt. It stands close by one of the spots referred to by Edward Llwyd, when writing of the dents made by the steel balls thrown by the giants. The other dent is near the corner, next to the road, of the stone fence on the other side of the by-road. One of these dents is filled up, on account of its inconvenience in front of the cow-house door.

At a distance of about a hundred yards from the Beudy, an old sulphur mine yawns undisturbed. A gentleman of the name of Mr. Gabriel Roberts worked it for a short time, and gave it up. It is a shaft of some thirty yards. The path which passes this sulphur mine leads through the trees into a

small field in a hollow, enclosed by a thin growth of trees. The reader will doubtless find a feeling of delightful isolation about this place if he finds it, as we did, about dusk on a beautiful day in April. The spot is called Pant y Gored ("The Hollow of the Weir"), and contains two old ruins. One is called "Murddyn llwyd" ("The Gray Ruin"), and contains a chamber like the smallest chamber in the ruin of Hafod Ernallt. The other, which is nearer north, is called "Y Murddyn Coch" ("The Red Ruin"), probably from the colour of its stone, and has a wall at the back of the house, loosely constructed, in order to protect the house from any falling rock.

Returning along the path to Beudy Bedd Owen, we now come into the main road. In the field on the left-hand side of the road, immediately before we come within sight of Dinas Emrys, a large quantity of human bones has been found from time to time. Tradition says that a stubborn battle was fought on this spot, but the parties are not known.

Llyn Dinas.—Dinas Lake is a capital specimen of a Welsh mountain tarn, and abounds with excellent trout. It takes its name, needless to say, from Dinas Emrys, with which it was so closely connected by religious ceremonies in the olden times. The little stud of projecting rock, at the lower end of Llyn Dinas, is the "Geirth," to which we referred in dealing with the name "Bedd Gelert." In the enclosure formed by this rock, the road, and the lake there used to be a large goat pen, into which nearly all the goats of the vale were gathered at certain seasons, to be cleaned, identified, and sometimes exchanged. It has since been altered by the owner of the copper mine behind the Sygun mountain, who made a road through it, and widened the small space between the rock and the lake.

Edward Llwyd writes thus of the banks of this lake: "On the banks of Llyn Dinas there are three graves, called the graves of the three youths, three men, or three soldiers (that is, the soldiers of Arthur), or the graves of the tall men; and two graves called the graves of the fiddler and his servant, or the graves of the black fiddler and his servant." Glasynys,

in commenting on the passage [illegible] that it is not so long

Llyn Dinas.

(*With Mr. O. M. Edwards's Permis*[illegible])

since the black fiddler and his companion died, and that they died of cold in returning from a "merry evening" at Bedd

Gelert. He said that he knew where the grave was, and that it was higher up than the graves of the soldiers. The little patch of green, between the road and the lake, is the only bit that is left of the field where the graves are thought to have been. When the road was made, the grave-marks were swept away, and we have failed to find any trace of the graves of the soldiers, or of that of the fiddler and his servant.

Bryn Diweddu.—The little hillock or mound called by the name Bryn Diweddu ought, from a point of strict order, to have come before Llyn Dinas, but as the reader will need to have a glance at the lake before taking in what we wish to say of this hillock, perhaps he will not mind the order we have chosen. It is in appearance very much like a landslip, or like a heap of gravel thrown up from the river-bed. In looking at it one gets an irresistible impression that it is artificial. Local tradition does not hesitate to follow up the impression, and proceeds to explain its construction without the slightest hesitation.

A giantess, whose only son had come to grief at the hands of a cowardly giant, who had a grudge against his father, had made up her mind that she would not bury her son in the hateful earth of her adopted home, and had gone to her native place to fetch some earth to cover him over. She did not want to bury him far from her own abode, and so chose to carry the earth of her native place to her adopted home, rather than bury her son a long way out of sight. She was carrying her apronful of the earth through Nant Gwynen, when her apron strings suddenly broke, and deposited its contents where Bryn Diweddu now stands. It is said that it was in giving a leap over the flooded river that the strings broke. She was in great distress, as she took the misfortune to be a sign that her doings did not find favour with the gods; so she sat down and wept. When she got up to go home, she found comfort in the thought that it might some day serve as a burial mound for some other giantess's son. Her wish was fulfilled, for the giant of Dinas Emrys was buried there. The hillock is still called by some "Arffedoged y Gawres" ("The Apronful of the Giantess").

It is called Bryn Diweddu ("The Hill of the Finishing"), because it was here they used to finish up the ceremonies connected with the drawing of the Afanc from the lake. This happened on the first of May, and was done as a commemorating service of the Flood, and the saving of Noah and his family in the Ark. The proceedings were carried on something in this way. At the upper end of the lake a kind of a large ferry-boat was built; it was then covered over with green clods and leafy boughs, to represent the earth. On the first of May, a man and a woman were placed in the boat, and were given the name of Dwyf and Dwyfan ("The God and the Goddess"); then two immense oxen, called Ychain Bannog (lit. "Well-fed Oxen"), were chained to it, and pulled it down to the lower end of the lake. It was there pulled safely to land, amid the greatest rejoicings of the spectators. The oxen were then released from the boat and led to the top of the mound, where they were slaughtered as a sacrifice. Then, as soon as the sacrifice began to burn, immense bonfires were made on the mountain-tops, as a sign to the whole country that sacrificing was going on. This is the origin of the burning of gorse on the evening of the first of May, which is still the practice in some of these districts. We are not told how long the closing feast, connected with this ceremony lasted, but the finishing up took place on the spot where the sacrifice was burnt, on Bryn Diweddu.

The Banks of Llyn Dinas.—Were it not that we have come across several specimens of Cytiau'r Gwyddelod, we might lead those interested in such marks of antiquity over the hills, on the right, above Llyn Dinas; but there is nothing extraordinary about them, so that we need not even define their position.

On the banks of the lake may be seen dilapidated old dwelling-houses, some of which are in utter ruin. The first that we shall mention is the one near the lower end of the lake, which was called Tan yr Allt. It was built by one of the ancestors of the Bulkeley family, for the sake of securing a vote in Merionethshire. It was occupied for years by a miserly old bachelor and his thrifty and industrious

sister. The next house was called Penrhyn y Gwartheg, which means "The Promontory of the Cattle." The only anecdote which we have been able to glean concerning this old house is the story of the woman who frequently forgot what day of the week it was. She went one Sabbath morning to Hafod y Rhisgl, about two miles' journey, to fetch some milk. The late William Williams was one of the strictest Sabbatarians, and was shocked when he saw her. "What do you mean by coming here to fetch milk on a Sunday," said he rather saucily. "I did not know it was Sunday," she replied in bewilderment; "Evan Owen" (a neighbour) "was at it busily pulling potatoes." The old Puritan thought that she ought to be made to recognise the one great day of the seven, and sent her back without any milk, to see whether "her stomach would not help her in the task" of distinguishing the Sabbath from other days of the week.

This anecdote reminds us of a story, told us quite recently, of a gentleman in Mentone, who was very careful of his duty towards the "Day of Rest." One morning, at breakfast, he told a ministerial gentleman at the table that he was going upstairs to his bedroom for that morning, that he liked to spend his Sabbaths in his devotions. "I am glad to hear it," said the minister in reply, "but I suppose you know it is Monday?" "Monday!" said the gentleman, "Monday!! Is it possible? Why, I was enjoying myself all day yesterday, and went with an excursion into the country." "You must have started early, too," said his prompter, "or else you might have seen us going to the services." To err is human.

Bwlch y Dderw, or Bwlch y Deri ("The Pass of the Oak or Oaks") is the third old house. A tailor and his wife are said to have lived here once upon a time, about whom amusing anecdotes are related.

On the other side of the lake stood another house called Ty Glan y Llyn ("The House by the Lake"), which was occupied at one time by a carpenter named William Dafydd (or Davies) "and his wife Alice." William Davies was one of the few, in his day, who boasted of being able to walk into the village any time he liked, and get a free supply of good

old beer, gratis. He could take hold of the "Peint Mawr" and drain it to the bottom at a breath. He was no exception to his fellows in his fondness of the glass. He was sitting at it in the Goat Hotel one day when the late Hugh Evans, Meillionen, turned in on his way to Llanfrothen to see some cattle he had there. When it became known "where he was bound for," William Dafydd said, in a sort of aside, to the man next to him, "If Hugh Evans got the whole of Carnarvonshire as one farm, he would not be satisfied without having a place in Anglesey for his oxen to graze on." On another occasion he and his son Bob were sawing an old oak-tree to make a coffin for the late Griffith Jones, Hafodydd Brithion. The oak-tree belonged to the deceased, and had been kept by him in his house for the express purpose of getting a coffin for himself from it. It was exceedingly hard, and father and son worked at it as hard as they could, but were making only a very slow progress. After a while William Dafydd turned to his son and said, "Bob, you will have to go to Hafodydd and put that old fellow in pickle; he will be badly tainted long before we get this wood ready for his coffin."

Plas Gwynant.—Plas Gwynant is the name of the beautiful mansion which we see on our right, about three quarters of a mile from Llyn Dinas. It was built some time during the last century, and commands as fine a view of the Nant Gwynen landscape as one can possibly wish. Beyond the gleaming ripples of the lake are the rocky hill-spurs which we have passed, rising peak above peak with almost mechanical precision, acknowledging with becoming modesty the supremacy of the towering Moel Hebog, which boasts of its twenty-six hundred feet, skyward, of solid rock. The Aran and Lliwedd, together with the intervening Cwmllan, always meet the eye from its windows, and the many charms of wild Cwm Merch can be caught at a glance. It is a delightful spot for any one who has an eye for the magnificent in Nature.

The following quotation from the late James Wyatt, Esq., in his valuable paper on Nant Gwynen, written in 1880, gives the story of the transfer of the estate of Plas Gwynant, practically, from Llewelyn the Great's time to this day. We have only to

remember that it was given by him, under the name of Hafod Tanygraig, to the Abbot of Aberconway, and that after the dissolution of the monasteries it passed into the hands of the Gwydir family. "By a deed in the Schedule of these title deeds, dated February 1680, it appears that Lord Willoughby and his wife, the late Lady Mary (she inherited Gwydir and other property, as sole surviving heiress of Sir Richard Wynn of Gwydir, son of Sir Owen, and grandson of Sir John Wynn

Leach, Carnarvon, Photo.) Plas Gwynant.

of Gwydir), released these properties in Nant Gwynen, with other lands, to Sir John Wynn of Wynnstay, son of Henry Wynn, and grandson of this Sir John Wynn of Gwydir, being the heir of the Baronetcy on which these properties were settled. It was from this Sir John of Wynnstay that the present Sir Watkin Williams Wynn and his grandfather derived their title to the Estate of Wynnstay."

In 1803 the father of the Sir Watkin Williams Wynn here referred to, sold the estate of Plas Gwynant to the late Daniel

Vawdrey, Esq. Mr. Vawdrey hailed from Tushingham Hall and Ravenscroft Hall, Cheshire, estates which have been held by the Vawdrey family ever since the Norman Sir Claude de Vawdrey received them as grants from Hugh Kevilioc, Earl of Chester, in the twelfth century. The representative of the family is the Rev. Llewelyn B. Vawdrey, M.A., of Brasenose College, Oxford, Lord of the manor of Tushingham and Moorsbarrow, Cheshire, and Vicar of Tushingham, to whom, and his younger brother, the Rev. Daniel Vawdrey, M.A., Areley King's Rectory, Stourport, the estate jointly belongs

The late Daniel Vawdrey, Esq., threw his whole heart into the improvement of his new property. He drained, planted trees, made roads, and stimulated his tenants in the improvement of their lands. He received a handsome silver cup for the construction of roads from some Society, and another for the planting of trees from the "Carnarvonshire Agricultural Society," the latter of which is in the possession of the Rev. Daniel Vawdrey, Vicar of Areley Kings. The estate measures about 1500 acres, equally divided into pasture, plantation, and open mountain land.

Plas Gwynant Ghost.—After the Vale of Gwynen had been opened up by the new high-road, Plas Gwynant soon became a select spot. Almost every one who saw it fell in love with it, and whenever it became vacant there was quite a competition among applicants for it. But in the thirties and forties of this century this took place rather frequently, as every occupant became nervous and restless after a few months. Something could be heard moving noisily over the house during the night, so that only the most indifferent could sleep in it. The frequent vacancies soon roused suspicion, and the rumour spread that Plas Gwynant was haunted by a ghost, with the result that no one would take it at any price.

Mr. Vawdrey lived at Hafod Tanygraig, or Glan Gwynant—we are not certain which—probably the latter. He treated this ghost notion as an absurdity, and determined to try and find out what was at the root of it. He got two bedrooms prepared one day, and told his man that he wanted him to go with him that night to sleep at Plas Gwynant. After

nightfall Mr. Vawdrey retired to his room, leaving the servant in the kitchen. Ere long he could hear some one entering the house with a heavy tread, and walking straight towards his room. He got up and opened the door, but saw nothing. He went to the kitchen, thinking that the servant might have been in the front room; but he had not moved from his chair, nor had he heard a sound. He returned to his room, and almost before he had seated himself he heard some one walking heavily up the stairs, and entering the room above his own. He rang the bell for the servant, and sent him up to see who was there. He found that particular chamber locked, but could hear the sound of some one mounting the garret stairs, and followed him. When he reached the garret, everything was in perfect silence and order. While the servant was making his fruitless search in the garret, his master could hear some noise in the kitchen, and had gone to see what it could possibly be. Both met outside the kitchen door, staring silently at each other in blank amazement.

The master was by now becoming a little serious, but did not yield his determination to spend the night there, and so told the servant that he must go with him into his room. As soon as they had closed the door behind them, there was a heavy knock on the outside, to which the servant attended. When opening the door, the candle was blown out, so that the servant saw no one; the master, however, distinctly heard the footsteps of two men entering the room, but after searching carefully every corner in it, he saw no one but the servant. In this way both were kept going from one room to another until cock-crow, when stillness was restored, and both fell off into a heavy sleep until the morning. The following night, when Mr. Vawdrey was preparing to go again, the servant made the excuse that he was very ill, and could not possibly go. His master was not sorry, and never suggested the experiment again.

In about eighteen months or so, one of the maids in Mr. Vawdrey's service got married, and her master offered her rooms free of rent if she would live in, and look after, Plas Gwynant. Her husband was by no means a nervous man,

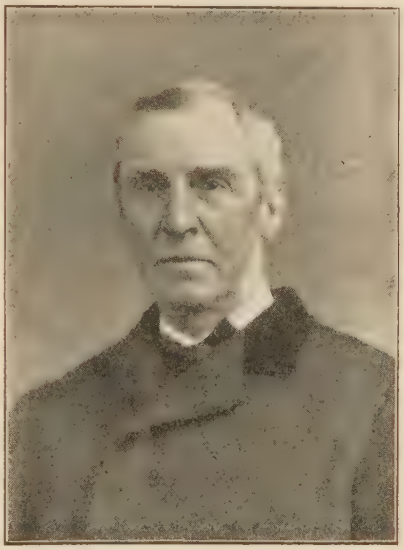
and the offer was accepted. They lived there quite undisturbed for about two years; and seeing that nothing troubled them, they agreed to the suggestion of their master to pay a small rent. Almost immediately after the new arrangement was made, the disturbance began again, and the ghost became exceedingly troublesome; so the young couple made up their minds to leave. The evening before leaving, the woman was going out into the yard to fetch something, and, as she was opening the door, some apparition appeared to her. On hearing her scream, her husband rushed to her, and found her stretched on the floor in a faint. When she regained consciousness, she told her husband that she had seen something very strange, but could not tell anybody what it was. She was never well again, and in a few months she died, leaving the mystery unrevealed.

After a time, a man by the name of Griffith ap Rhisiart entered Mr. Vawdrey's service. He had heard the whole story about the ghost, and offered to go and sleep in Plas Gwynant, if his master were willing. The offer was gladly accepted. Griffith was a religious man, but retained his firm faith in ghosts, though he feared them not. He chose "the ghost's chamber" for his bedroom, and, before he had occupied it an hour, the ghost began to boisterously practise his antics. Griffith took absolutely no heed of its presence or its doings, until at last he became irritated, and challenged the ghost to show its face and speak to him. He saw nothing; but the noise was nightly increasing. It tramped the floors and stairs as if in wooden clogs, threw open the doors with a clash, and dragged the bed and bedclothes all over the room while Griffith was trying to sleep. All it got for its trouble was, "Well, it matters little whether one sleeps on the floor or in his bed, as long as he does sleep." At last the ghost got weary of trying to annoy this man, and by degrees withdrew altogether.

J. A. Froude at Plas Gwynant.—After Griffith's splendid, though almost effortless, defeat of the ghost, and tranquillity was restored, a gentleman of some wealth and position took Plas Gwynant, and made it the centre of a good deal of the

sporting life of the district. Mr. Coventry kept a good pack of otter hounds, which he left to the charge of William Jones, Castell. He was here for many years, and was never in any way troubled by the ghost.

During the next few years, Plas Gwynant was occupied by the late James Anthony Froude, whose name and fame have spread over all the English reading world since those days. It was at Plas Gwynant that he sought refuge from the bitter scoldings of the clerical fraternity, because of his apostasy. He took it in the summer of 1850, and remained in his delightful semi-seclusion until the latter end of the summer of 1853. Some of his very best papers in *Short Studies on Great Subjects* were written during this time, those on "The Book of Job," "Spinoza," "Homer," "The Lives of the Saints" being among them. Before this he had only published, if we mistake not, the *Life of St. Neot*, a sermon preached on the death of the Rev. George May Coleridge, *Shadows of the Clouds*, and *Nemesis of Faith*; but he was using his seclusion in laying down the foundations of the work which immediately brought him a reputation, and made people class him with such writers as Macaulay—*The History of England from the Fall of Wolsey, etc.*



(*Elliott and Fry, Photo.*)
The late Prof. J. A. Froude.

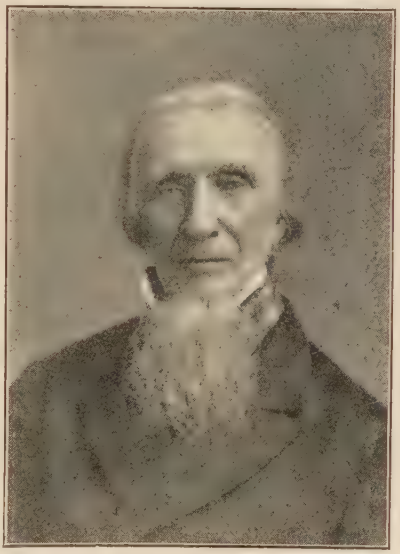
He is remembered in the parish as a very quiet and reserved gentleman of the kindest disposition. Some remember him best sitting down in church, a little nearer the front

than the middle of the floor, listening to the sermon with his head bent forward, and trying to pull the little string of hair on his forehead, so that his upturned eyes could catch sight of it. But with all his bad listening, he could reproach Kingsley for forgetting himself on a Sunday. It happened that both had come to the English service one Sabbath morning, and when it was over, even before they had left the church, Kingsley said to John Jones, the parish clerk, "and king of fishermen," "Where shall we go fishing to-morrow John?" "Come, Charles," said Mr. Froude, "John does not want to talk about fishing to-day; you must give John his Sunday, at least." There was a kindly twinkle in his eye as he administered this gentle reproof to the clergyman.

Froude tried to get Plas Gwynant several times after he left it, but a lady by the name of Mrs. Minshall was in possession. This lady lived here for very many years, and her German companion, Miss Starke, lives at Bryn Dinas still. She was followed by the late Rev. Daniel Vawdrey, M.A., to whose memory the lectern in Bedd Gelert church has been dedicated. He was a fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford, and had been Rector of Stepney (which was then the gift of Brasenose), and afterwards Rector of Darley, where he spent thirty years of his life. He was for several years at Glan Gwynant, before removing into Plas Gwynant. Miss Bannerman resides there at present.

F. W. Newman and the Ghost.—Several of Froude's College and literary friends visited him at Plas Gwynant, and sometimes as many as four, five, and even six of the leading English literary men would meet there. Tom Hughes, Tom Taylor, Charles Kingsley, F. W. Newman, and Froude himself may be mentioned as one out of the several friendly groups that came together in those days. On one occasion, when such a party had met together at Plas Gwynant, the conversation turned upon ghosts. Among other ghosts that were discussed, the one that had been troubling people in that house came under review. It so happened that F. W. Newman had only arrived on that very day, and the house was very

full. Knowing that he was no believer in ghosts or the possibility of their existence, and hearing him giving such a free expression to his contempt for the notions which had kept alive the story of that ghost, Froude thought that he had found a capital opportunity of finding out how far Newman's ideas and beliefs protected his nerves. It so happened that the only vacant chamber in the house was Griffith's old bedroom—"the haunted chamber."



(*Elliott and Fry, Photo.*)

The late Prot. F. W. Newman.

Newman was put to sleep in that bedroom, but was not told that it was haunted. He appeared next morning after spending a sleepless night, and made the excuse that his journey had tired him too much to sleep after it, while being in a strange bed came in for a share of the blame. He promised himself complete rest the second night; but he was disappointed, and for several nights he was being continually disturbed. He then asked the housekeeper whether the ghost, of which they spoke, sometimes disturbed the room in which he slept. She replied that that was the room in which it did most of its mischief, but that she had frequently slept in it, and had never heard a sound. He was greatly astonished, but gave none of the other friends any suspicion of his discomfort. At last things became insufferable, and he told the whole story at the dinner table one evening. He said that he had hardly slept a consecutive hour since he had arrived, that he did not

believe in the possibility of ghosts, but that something, by no means imaginary, was keeping up a continual disturbance in his room, and added that he wished to be excused the next morning; he wanted to return home. No amount of persuasion and offers of another bedroom could get him to remain. This happened during Froude's earliest months at Plas Gwynant, but Newman never visited him again in Snowdonia.

It is strange that none of Mr. Froude's household either saw or heard anything of the kind during their stay, nor has any one else since that time.

The Fortunes of Hafodydd Brithion.—Passing with a mere mention the occasional residence of Captain Wynn Griffith, Bangor, which has replaced the old house of Hafod Tanygraig, and leaving Castell on our left, we soon come to an old farmhouse called Hafodydd Brithion. This farm has only barely escaped being reckoned as part of the less-known Vale of Nanmor; as it is, Nant Gwynen claims it as a part of its varied treasures. The distinction which this place has among its neighbouring farmhouses, is that it is associated with somewhat romantic events in matrimonial history.

Not many years before the eighteenth century had breathed its last, a male child was given to an anxious mother who lived in this farm. This "bundle of possibilities" was labelled with the name of William, which familiarity and custom shortened into Wil. To act with good faith to the instincts of homely Welshmen, the neighbours had long before his birth shortened the name of the farm into Hafodydd, and then into 'Fodydd; so that William Jones, Hafodydd Brithion, became known invariably as "Wil Jones y Fodydd." Wil was brought up to be a keeper of his father's flock, varying his duties with as much trout-fishing as his task allowed him. He received no education either of a secular or a religious nature, except the little his parents gave him while seeking to teach him to read his Bible. The late Mr. Daniel Vawdrey used to engage him now and again to run with and for messages for himself and his household, and in this way he soon picked up a fair knowledge of rustic English. His Saul like stature made him

an object difficult to pass unnoticed, for he measured no less than 6 feet 6 inches in his stocking feet. Perhaps the shortcomings of his tailor, or the short measure of his clothier, made it quite as difficult for any one to fail to notice him. He owed his great height least of all to his body, and most of all to his neck and legs; and while his itinerant tailor never failed in providing a deep collar to his coat, he sadly neglected his crural extremities.

Mr. Vawdrey's keen eye perceived in Wil Jones the making of a man, and his kind heart determined for him the course he should take in accomplishing the task. Mr. Madocks and he had become close and intimate friends, through a common enterprise—that of making the road from Llanrwst to Porth Dinllaen,—and he introduced Wil Jones to Mr. Madocks. The latter took to him at once, and made up his mind to give him every chance to succeed in life. Being a mountain bred rustic, one may easily imagine how foreign to him would be the intricate turns of etiquette; but his attentive, quick, keen, and shrewd mind soon penetrated through the greatest part of the mysteries of social conventions, and his love of dress seconded his dignified bearing and good looks, so that Mr. Madocks ere long introduced him to his own social circle.

An important institution at this time was the Horse Races of Tremadoc, at the close of which Mr. Madocks frequently gave a costly spread and a ball. Among the guests on one occasion were Wil Jones, and a widowed lady of good position. This lady had marked his gentlemanly appearance and bearing, and had made inquiries of Mr. Madocks concerning him. The master spoke of his right-hand man as his friend, and as a true gentleman. He saw that Mrs. Caldecot, Llanbedrog, and Holton Hall, Lincolnshire, had fallen deeply in love with the ex-shepherd of Nant Gwynen, and arranged that both should be invited to the next ball, there to be formally introduced. The evening came, and Wil Jones appeared among the gay company ready for the sweet excitement of dancing with a lady who loved him. His dress, his dancing, his conversation all told well in his favour, and the courtship

which began that evening soon ripened into marriage; but Mrs. Caldecot had taken the precaution not to allow that happy consummation to make her Mrs. Jones—special interests called upon her to respect the shades of her first husband, and our Wil Jones became known as William Lloyd Caldecot, Esq.

Foolish gossip has weaved many a story based on the supposed disappointment of Mrs. Caldecot, after finding out his origin and true position in the world. Mr. Madocks is charged with having misled the good lady, and with making on her mind an impression that he was a man of wealth and standing. To give the story the spice of sensationalism, Mrs. Caldecot is represented as having cooled down after a fit of rage and disappointment, and to have asked if her husband was guilty of murdering some one, and on his replying that he was not, to have told him that she forgave him everything short of that. The only possible foundation for this idle gossip is the opposition which Mrs. Caldecot's friends may have made to the match, of which we know nothing. Certain it is, however, whether any resentment was shown to the match or not, that William Lloyd Caldecot, Esq., soon won his way into the esteem of the neighbouring gentry, and was appointed Sheriff of Carnarvonshire in the year 1822-23.

Mrs. Caldecot's daughter, by her first husband, married a gentleman whom we now recall as Major-General Sir Love P. Jones Parry, K.H., Madryn, who represented the Carnarvon Boroughs in Parliament during 1835-37, and whose son took such an active part in the politics of the county, being, like his father, an M.P. after very hard-fought contests. Mr. Caldecot became a great favourite at his step-daughter's home at Madryn, and the Colonel—he was not yet Major-General—freely introduced him to his friends at the Club, whenever Mr. Caldecot found his way to London.

Another Wil Jones y 'Fodydd appeared in the generation following that of the first Wil Jones, and figured in the matrimonial world with less good fortune, but no less romance, than his uncle. We have already referred to Mr. Coventry, who lived at Plas Gwynant. This gentleman had a daughter

of quite an unconventional turn of mind, and possessed of a vigorous and robust nature, though of only ordinary stature. She was passionately fond of outdoor life, especially the farm life of these rural and hilly districts. She was out rambling one beautiful spring morning, and came across Wil Jones feeding the young lambs of his father's flock with fresh milk. She drew up to him, and entered into conversation with him about the lambs, and about the necessity of thus feeding them in the early spring. He had quite an attractive face, and possessed a voice of perfect sweetness, and his tender care of the lambs made the face and the voice infinitely sweeter in Miss Coventry's esteem. We might say at once that Wil Jones was not at all a handsome man. He, like Mr. Lloyd Caldecot, was lank and tall, his height being made up mainly by his legs, which were by no means adorned by their projecting knee-caps, and immense pedal extremities. Neither did he by any means try to give himself a better appearance by cultivating an agile manner and movement; and he was not free from strong suspicions of laziness.

Miss Coventry, however, found herself in love with Wil Jones; and one of her parents' maids was let into the secret, and was asked to work the oracle between them. She did her part most adroitly, developing matters without a hitch, until things ripened for the marriage license. That was secured, and the curate in charge at Bedd Gelert, the Rev. Grey Edwards, was asked to unite them in holy matrimony before the altar of his church. Miss Coventry's parents knew nothing of these movements, and the faithful curate despatched a messenger, at three o'clock in the morning, to inform them that he had been asked to marry their daughter the next morning at his church. He received an answer, begging him to do nothing of the kind, to which he gave the most respectful heed.

But obstructions only make the tide of love more impetuous, and the young couple determined to forego the privilege of having a religious marriage ceremony, giving the Registrar the pleasant task of uniting them in his civil capacity. Mrs. Jones was cast off from Plas Gwynant, and forbidden to approach her

parents' home. She set up house at Tremadoc, and took in pupils for music, drawing, etc.; but the world was not very generous towards them at Tremadoc, so they removed to Pwllheli, Mrs. Jones continuing there again her work of teaching.

After a time the family—for now they had been blessed with children—removed to Pen Llyn, just outside Pwllheli, and ultimately took the farm of Llwynhudol, close by. The whole weight of this new undertaking fell upon Mrs. Jones, as Mr. Jones knew nothing of farming as such; he was a shepherd pure and simple. She was recognised as one of the keenest of women, who knew as much about the value of horses and cattle as any dealer that entered Pwllheli market. Nor did she shrink from the manual labour of the farm, but put her whole energy into whatever needed doing. After her husband's death, she removed to Croydon, where she died. All the children have turned out into the world, and have quitted their place of birth, doing admirably in every sense.

The secret of the part which the maid had taken in the courtship of the young pair ultimately leaked out, and the Coventrys immediately dismissed her. The dismissal, however, did not lead to serious consequences, for she soon found herself the mistress of a hotel, and became widely known as Mrs. Harry Owen of Pen y Gwryd.

CHAPTER XVII

NANT GWYNEN—CWMLLAN

Bethania.—Descending now from the hills on our right, we come back to the main road. The modest little chapel on the left is called Bethania, from which the other buildings take their name as a row or group. All these houses are new, while the chapel dates as far back as 1867. The Calvinistic Methodists erected their first meeting-house on this spot in

the year 1825, on a sixty years' lease from Sir Thomas Mostyn, Bart., and rebuilt it into its present form in the afore-mentioned year, at the total cost of £434. We say "total cost" in order to be true to the spirit of the men who made it possible to put up such a structure at such a small expense. They looked upon the labours of their men and horses in carrying materials for the work, from far and near, as the greatest of privileges, and they proved themselves worthy of the privilege by clearing off the whole of their debt in eight years.

In a room above the chapel, which measures the length of the building, by about 12 feet wide, the old schoolmasters drummed the rudiments into the boys and girls of a generation or two ago. Some of the masters of the old school are still living, and we believe that the last of that noble series is still to be found in the person of the Rev. John Jones, Hermon, Bethesda.

The pastor of this active little cause lives in his miniature manse, at the northern end of the chapel. It has a thriving Sabbath School of some one hundred and twenty, and special classes during winter months for the study of different subjects of permanent value.

Sir Edward Watkin's Chalet.—We will now leave the main road for another climb, and turn to the left up the new path that leads to Snowdon. At the angle between the Snowdon path and the road to Hafod y Llan are Sir Edward Watkin's coach-house and stables, built from the stones of old ruins, like that of Bwlch Gareg, near Hafod y Llan Uchaf, and Mur Cryfaglach, the latter giving signs of having been a place of considerable importance.

Sir Edward's chalet now looks down upon us from one of the choicest spots in Cwmllan, at an elevation of a little more than 100 feet above the main road. It is built on the ground of an old cottage called Ty'n y Coedcae, but is made of a far more perishable material than the humble structure which it replaces. The appearance of the painted corrugated iron possesses no charm, and the retreat of the wealthy "Railway King" of modern times depends entirely upon its situation for its external attractiveness. It is exceedingly comfortable

within, and Sir Edward visits his Eryrian home with intense delight whenever the season comes round, nestling within its peaceful seclusion, as if weary of the weight of the crown which skill and enterprise have brought him, and as if laying it down, unobserved by the world without, gave him new strength and energy for the busier life of Cheshire and Kent.

The Chalet "is only one story high, but, occupying considerable space of ground, is a happy compromise between commodiousness and cosiness. All the rooms are panelled with light wood, and every room is abundantly served with electric light. The service is ingeniously managed, and is perhaps the cheapest in England." The never-failing reservoir constructed at Braich yr Oen, below the copper mine of that name, supplies "the motive power, which is concentrated upon a beautiful little engine in a shed just below the Chalet."[1]

Sir Edward's advent to the place dates from 1889, when he bought the estate of Hafod y Llan from Mr. William Jones. Concerning this estate the late Mr. Wyatt says: "The grandfather of Sir Roger Mostyn, the first Baronet, married Mary, the eldest daughter of Sir John Wynn of Gwydir, and Hafod y Llan came to the Mostyns as a marriage portion." It was sold to a certain Mr. Williams, once member for Macclesfield, who was uncle of Mr. William Jones, the late owner. Sir Edward has since bought Ffridd Isaf, on the other side of Snowdon, so that he owns a large portion of the mountain which yearly attracts thousands to its summit.

The late Mr. Gladstone's Visit.—In the eyes of Welshmen the most popular act of Sir Edward Watkin, since his advent to Snowdonia, was his bringing of Mr. Gladstone to Cwmllan. The sturdy veteran had been making a speech at Carnarvon on September 12, 1892, on his way to Nant Gwynen, and had made his route along the Narrow Gauge Railway from Dinas to Rhyddu. On the 13th thousands followed the same route, seeking to reach a particular spot in Cwmllan, in time for the meeting to declare Sir Edward's new path to Snowdon free for ever for public use. It little mattered to those enthusiastic admirers of the Grand Old Man that a drenching rain poured down

[1] *Pall Mall Budget*, September 15, 1892.

upon them; their one concern was getting to Cwmllan. And who can describe their various methods of travelling there?

Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone seem to have been possessed with the same spirit of heedlessness, for they drove in an open conveyance, in the course of the forenoon, to see the Pass and Bridge of Aberglaslyn. It was on their journey back, and while pausing for a few moments at the Post Office, that the late Mr. John Roberts, postmaster, presented Mr. Gladstone with a pair of woollen hose, in imitation of the act of John Jones, Glan Gwynant, when Lord John Russell visited Bedd Gelert in November 1851. When Mr. Roberts told the Premier that they were both of the same age, Mr. Gladstone replied, "You carry your years better than I do!"

Shortly after mid-day the hanging clouds began to lift, and it turned out a delightful afternoon, such as we frequently get in these mountain districts after showery mornings. When the sun had come forth from behind the dense clouds, it came to cast its gleams upon the hundred cataracts of Cwmllan, which the morning rains had coloured and quickened. Nature, indeed, seemed to have come to a good understanding with the important occasion, and vied with the two thousand people in the heartiness of its welcome. Between three and four o'clock, Sir Edward and Lady Watkin, Miss Gladstone, Mrs. Drew, Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Mr. J. Bryn Roberts, M.P., Mr. Thomas E. Ellis, M.P., and Mr. D. Lloyd-George, M.P., had surrounded Mr. and Mrs. Gladstone on the rostrum, which had been put up for the occasion on "a picturesque bluff" in the very centre of the valley. The hymn-singing, which had been interrupted by the enthusiastic cheers of the crowd, gave Mr. Gladstone so much delight that he was loath to do anything except listen to the music; but an address from the Liberal Association of Festiniog, and another from the quarrymen of Llanberis, had to be heard read in the vernacular, before the second hymn was given. The choirs of Carnarvon and Portmadoc were led by Mr. W. J. Williams, of the former town, but nearly every member of the crowd swelled the strains along with the choirs from first to last.

Mr. Gladstone was in the best of spirits, and made an

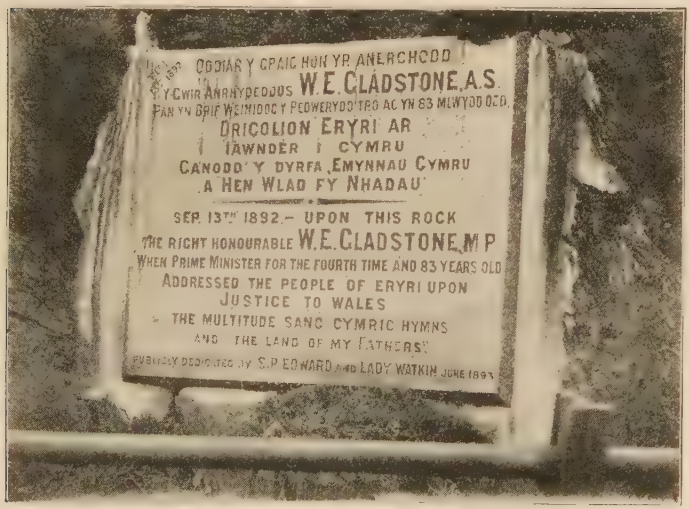
excellent speech, dwelling upon Disestablishment only for a brief moment, and throwing the weight of the occasion into the vexed "Land Question in Wales." Mr. Bryn Roberts, M.P., proposed a vote of thanks, and Mr. T. E. Ellis, M.P., who came in for a well-deserved word of praise in the speech of his great leader, seconded the same. After Mr. Lloyd-George, M.P., had warmly supported the proposition, Sir Edward asked the gathering to show its favour for it by lifting up their two hands. The rocks resounded with the cheers which followed, and the "Grand Old Man" replied by asking for "more of that delightful Welsh music." After several pieces had been rendered, the party returned to the Chalet, amid the hearty strains of "Land of my Fathers."

The amusing side of this gathering is that it was meant to open up the new path to Snowdon, and to declare it public property for ever more; but not a word was said of the new path from beginning to end. On the following morning, however, the host, hostess, and guests started out of the Chalet, accompanied by Mr. Edward Owen, the tried guide of Bedd Gelert, and some constables, on their way to Snowdon, or at least Bwlch y Saethau. This formally, or informally, opened up the path, though only Mrs. Drew and Mrs. Edgar Watkin climbed to the summit.

It seems that Mrs. Gladstone availed herself of the service of a nimble donkey, after the path had become too narrow, rough, and steep for the carriage, in which they drove part of the way. The ever-humorous Andronicus, in his "Home Notes" in one of the Welsh papers of the week following, asks, in seeming seriousness, if that donkey had carried Mr. Gladstone, instead of his good wife, up the Snowdon path, what would have been asked per hair for the tail of that envied creature at its death? The flesh of the cow that attacked Mr. Gladstone was sold at a premium, by a lucky Chester butcher; its hide was stuffed by some one else, and exhibited in a window in the city; her calf was bought at a fancy price, and all because this mischievous beast had tried to kill the G.O.M. If, then, a cow which had tried to take away his life could rouse such public interest, and reach such value in the market, what

would not the people pay for a fragment of the dead ass which had helped him? The late Duke of Wellington's horse ran so high in public esteem, that every hair of his tail was sold for no less than half a crown; and the head of an ass has reached a high price ere this, while the chin-bone of one of the species has been known to substitute a sword and a fountain. Genial Andronicus!

Thanks to the thoroughness of Sir Edward Watkin, we need not fear to see the rock, upon which Mr. Gladstone stood, blown into atoms, and sold as relics in the market of curios. He has placed a large stone slab on the front of that lapideous platform, bearing in bold characters the following words :—


ODDIAR Y GRAIG HON YR ANERCHODD
Y CWIR ANRHYDEDDUS W.E.GLADSTONE.A.S.
PAN YN DRIF WEITHIODD Y PEDWERYDD TRO AC YN 83 MLWYDD OED.
DRICOLION ERYRI AR
TAWNDER I CYMRU
CANODD Y DYRFA EMYNNAU CYMRU
A HEN WLAD FY NHADAU
SEP. 13TH 1892.- UPON THIS ROCK
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE W.E.GLADSTONE.M.P
WHEN PRIME MINISTER FOR THE FOURTH TIME AND 83 YEARS OLD
ADDRESSED THE PEOPLE OF ERYRI UPON
JUSTICE TO WALES
THE MULTITUDE SANG CYMRIC HYMNS
AND THE LAND OF MY FATHERS
PUBLICLY DEDICATED BY SIR EDWARD AND LADY WATKIN JUNE 1895

(*Leach, Carnarvon, Photo.*)

A Shepherd's Fairy Staff.—Before we proceed higher up the Cwm, we may here relate the following story, after Glasynys:[1]—

"A shepherd was one day driving his sheep towards the heights in Cwmllan, when he heard a low moanful noise in the

[1] *Cymru Fu*, p. 479.

cleft of a rock. He turned to see what was there, and found that some poor creature was weeping piteously. He drew near and helped a wee lass to extract herself, and ere long two middle-aged men came up to him, and thanked him for his kindness, and, on leaving, one of them gave him a staff, as a gift to commemorate the kind act. The year following this, every sheep which he possessed brought forth two ewe lambs, and his sheep continued to breed thus for several years. But one evening, he had loitered in the village until it was very late, and it happened to be an exceptionally stormy night. The wind howled, and the clouds poured down their contents like water-spouts, while the shades of night were so thick that one could hardly see anything. While crossing the river, which rushes down through Cwmllan, and which was that night so flooded that it swept everything before it, the staff somehow slipped from his hand, and the next morning, when he went up the Cwm, he found that nearly all his sheep had been swept away by the flood, and that his wealth had vanished, just as it had come, with the staff."

The story which precedes this in the book, from which we quote, seems to have been pieced together from more than one of the complete stories which we have given in our chapters on Nant Colwyn.

Cwm Tregalan.—We will now press up the path towards Snowdon, and pass the roofless houses of the Cwmllan slate quarries, where the path takes a sharp turn and becomes much narrower and steeper. After climbing for some distance, the valley to our left becomes clear to our view, and it is necessary that its every feature should be marked. Let the eye run up the gully which collects the waters of the two steep slopes; then see the suddenly rising ground which is skirted by the gully. The flat space between that rising ground and the vertical mountain-side beyond is a large plot of land—larger than one imagines in looking at it from any point in the path. Can any one deny that we have here the results of an immense landslip? Hardly; but it must have happened many centuries ago. This gorge is called Cwm Tregalan, and the outer piece of the landslip is called Braich Tregalan. It was

on the spot now covered by this falling débris that the renowned old city of Tregalan once existed and flourished. Local tradition says that it was at the taking of this city that King Arthur lost his life, and the story is worth repeating.

The Death of King Arthur.—When King Arthur was pursuing his enemies among the mountains of Eryri, he heard in Dinas Emrys that they were encamped in strong force within the walls of Tregalan, and that all the passes were under defence. He summoned all his forces to meet on the flat ground opposite Craflwyn, called "Y Waen Wen," and there selected a strong regiment from the pick of his men. He then directed his march to Cwmllan, over the mountain of Hafod y Porth, and through Bwlch Castell y Wawch. After a tremendous struggle, Arthur drove the enemy from the town, in the direction of Cwm Dylif, and then followed them in pursuit. But when the leading portion of the army had reached the top of the pass, the ranks of the enemy let fly a shower of arrows, and Arthur received a fatal wound. His soldiers buried him in the pass, so as to prevent a single man of the foe from returning that way while Arthur's body rested there.

To this day there remains in the middle of this pass a large heap of stones, which is called "Carnedd Arthur" (Arthur's Cairn), and this marks the spot where the great British prince takes his rest. The pass is called "Bwlch y Saethau" (The Pass of the Arrows) from this fatal incident, of which we could hardly have expected Pennant to hear anything during his hurried excursion. He speaks of it as if the name had been derived from its having been "a station for hunters to watch the wanderings of the deer." The meadow on which Arthur selected his men, before setting out for Tregalan, is called "Gwaen y Gwehilion" (The Meadow of the Refuse), because the rejected soldiers encamped there.

It may be interesting to note the coincidence between the last part of the following triad and the above story:—"The Three Treacherous Meetings of the Isle of Britain.—The meeting of Afarwy ab Lludd and the men of devastation, who gave a landing-place to the men of Rome in the Isle of Britain

at Meinlas Point, and no more—whereof the end was the conquest by the men of Rome of the Isle of Britain. Second, the meeting of the chosen warriors of the Welsh and the English champions, on the hill of Caer Caradog, where the treachery of the long knives was committed, through the baseness of Gwrtheyrn Gwrthenau; for it was by his counsel (being privy with the English) that almost all the Welsh leaders were there slain. Third, the meeting of Medrod and Iddog Corn Prydain and their men in Nant Gwynen, where *the ruin of Arthur* was compassed, to the stablishing of the Saxons in the Isle of Britain."

Hafod y Llan.—Having gazed with wonder and awe at the magnificent sights that come to view from Bwlch y Saethau—the overhanging summit, the placid tarns of Llyn Ffynon Las and Llyn Llydaw, the vertical and almost bladeless Lliwedd—we turn back, as Mr. Gladstone did, without climbing to the top of Snowdon, though we know our hunger and thirst may be satisfied there.

If certain muscles begin to ache as we descend, it will not be the fault of the matchless panorama that we find on every hand. Our muscular pains will serve to remind us that we are spending life on too low a level. But lest the hardened climber be too hard upon his apprentices, we will maintain silence during the greater part of the descent, and simply say opposite the first house we come to after passing "Gladstone's Platform," "This is Plas Cwmllan," and lower down, after passing the bridge of the disused incline, "This is Hafod y Llan Uchaf," unless, indeed, the apprentices defy their pains, and linger with delight above the lovely falls and cascades of the river that descends with us. Then we might speak of its rounded pools, and pebble-filled punch-bowls, of its magnificent variety of shades of green, and of its widely-blown spray.

By the Chalet stables we turn to the left, and follow the road that leads to the farmhouse beyond. The name of this farmhouse is "Hafod y Llan." Some say that, correctly, it should be called "Hafod y Llem," while others maintain that both names given are incorrect, and that it should be "Hafod Arlain." Those who maintain that "Hafod y Llan" is the

correct name, support their notion by the story invented by Glasynys,[1] that the Prior of Bedd Gelert had a large farm here, from which the Priory was supplied with milk. From the old charter quoted already, we know that all this land belonged, not to Bedd Gelert, but to the monastery of Aberconway. So the word "Llan"—the Welsh word for a parish church—is not to be explained in that way. Those who plead for the second name say that the cwm called "Cwmllan" should be "Cwm Llem," as the proper name of the river, from which the cwm derives its name, is "Llem," which is a feminine adjective qualifying *afon*. Hafod y Llan, being situated at the very mouth of this cwm, should be called "Hafod y Llem." The third party claim the name "Arlain" for the river and the cwm, which, even if it were correct, must be due to a wrong transcription of "Arlam" ("A Spring Leap"), a name by no means inappropriate. But "Llem," which means *sharp* or *severe*, so admirably describes the river and the cwm, and it has what little authority there is in the spelling of the old charter of Aberconway, that we consider number two by far the strongest case.

Hafod y Llan—for such we must call it, because of the tyranny of custom—is a homestead of great importance in the religious history of Nonconformist Wales. It has enjoyed many local distinctions, as the home of one of the most influential families of the parish. When the weak and ignorant, harassed and perplexed people of Nant Gwynen wanted counsel or advice, Hafod y Llan was a favourite place. The grandfather and father of the present occupier—Rhys and William Griffith Williams—filled, in their turn, every post of honour which their fellow-parishioners could confer upon them. But the event that has made Hafod y Llan a place of universal interest is that it was within its walls the greatest spiritual awakening, which Wales has felt during the present century, was first experienced. We simply mention the fact here, so that the reader may take notes of the humble, and now old-fashioned, dwelling, as we mean to devote part of a chapter to the wonderful *Bedd Gelert Revival*, near the end of this volume.

[1] See *Cymru Fu*, p. 469.

Not far from this farmhouse bubbles up the warm and brackish waters of a mineral spring. What medicinal virtues it possesses, we are not able to say, as we have not met any one who has ever attempted to analyse it.

The Hairy Man and his Cave.—Not many yards beyond the farmhouse of Hafod y Llan, we cross a little stream, which is formed by the united waters of the Llem and Merch—their confluence is a few yards above the antiquated little bridge by which we cross. The river Merch flows down from Cwm Merch, the hollow between Lliwedd and Gallt y Wenallt. Very few tourists have missed the sight which one gets from Bethania after a little rain, if they have been travelling towards Pen y Gwryd. Right in front are a series of small falls and milky cascades, which the green fir-trees are striving to hide from view. There lies the course of the river Merch, which a few showers make exceedingly boisterous, and a little sunshine makes not much better than dry. Its whole course is not over a mile, but it adds considerably to the delightful scenery of Nant Gwynen.

A little way above the point where it joins the Llem, its waters tumble down over a very steep and rugged bed, over which it is necessary to climb in order to get to a pool about a hundred yards higher up. That pool is fixed in a contracted place, pressed in by two perpendicular rocks. At the upper end of this pool are huddled together a number of large stones, which seem to have fallen from the rock on the left-hand side. Just below these we find an inaccessible cave, which is called "Ogof Owain Lawgoch" ("The Cave of Gory-Handed Owen"), or "Ogof y Gwr Blewog" ("The Cave of the Hairy Man"). This Owen Lawgoch is the subject of the following story.

A very long time ago, the good people of Nant Gwynen were sorely troubled by an unknown audacious robber, who used to break into their houses during the night, robbing them of their food, and other articles of general use, without ever being seen or heard. The cows and the goats, in some of the milking pens, were frequently milked dry before the morning; and often the fattest sheep were stolen from the folds in spite of every watchfulness. Things went on thus for a long time,

and no one could find out who the thief was, nor from what direction he came. But one day, when one of the shepherds of Bwlch Mwrchan was on his way down from the mountain, he could see a great big man, covered all over with reddish hair, sitting on a hill above that farmhouse. It immediately occurred to him that this was the robber, and, by secretly making a circuitous journey, he managed to enter the house unobserved by the hairy man. He informed the family of his

Sir Ed. Watkin's Chalet. Hafod y Llan.
Cwmllan (with the Summit in the Distance).

discovery, and every one set out at once to catch the robber. The hairy man no sooner saw them than he recognised his danger, and sprang to his feet, leaping like a roe over hill and hollow until he had betaken himself clean out of sight.

After once getting scent of him, the inhabitants of Nant Gwynen watched for him diligently; and one day they saw him again, basking in the broiling sun on the side of Lliwedd. They set the dogs after him, but he fled like a hare, and the dogs so completely lost him that they knew not in what

direction to go. When the people found that they could not catch him, they began to think that he was a vicious demon, sent by some unknown enemy to worry them. So they sent men to consult a magician as to how they might get rid of him. That wise man advised them to seek a greyhound of a uniformly red colour, without a single hair of any other shade, and to set the dog after him, the very next time they saw him, adding that he would surely be caught. The whole country was searched for such a greyhound, and in Nannau the exact thing was got. The dog was brought to Nant Gwynen, was set after the robber the next time he was seen, and was on the point of snatching at his heel when the hairy man leapt down a steep cliff, and was next seen speeding far out of the dog's sight, hale and scatheless. Several times he escaped in a similar way, until every one believed that he must be a demon, and that it was hopeless trying to catch him.

There was at that time a small farmhouse, which can still be seen between Hafod y Llan and Bwlch Mwrchan, and which was then called Ty'n yr Ow Allt. The brave and courageous wife of that farm had remained down to watch, having been roused by a deep resentment at the frequent losses with which she had been inflicted from time to time. All her butter, cheese, and bread sometimes vanished in one night. About midnight she heard some whispering outside the kitchen window. She quietly approached the window, hatchet in hand, and saw the hairy man already half-way in through it. He saw her, and instantly retreated, but not before the woman had dealt him a blow, which separated his right hand from his wrist. The next morning the people went in search of the robber, and his blood was traced as far as the pool above referred to, and on the rock by the extreme end of the pool, where they discovered the cave, of which they knew nothing previously. The hairy man was never seen again, and it is believed that he perished in this inaccessible cave from the effects of the blow and the bleeding.

Edward Llwyd gives the following version of the latter part of the above tradition. "In the hollow of the river Ierch, at Nanhwynen, is the cave of the hairy man, who formerly came

to Ty'n'r Owallt (a little below the cave), where a woman lay in her confinement, being alone in the house, for some of the family had gone to the church (which was also close at hand, as you shall hear presently) to have the child baptized, and the others were attending to something out of doors. The door, however, was shut, and he stretched his hairy hand over the (lower half of the) door for the purpose of opening it. But when the woman saw this, she courageously cut off his hand with a hatchet; and when the people came home, they tracked the blood along the snow till they came to the cave, which to this day is called the cave of the hairy man."[1]

A Merry Evening and a Tragic Night.—We have referred more than once to Bwlch Mwrchan, the farmhouse nearest the lake on its lower side, and on the other side of the river from the road. Some called it "Bwlch Mwyalchen" ("The Pass of the Thrush"). It used to be two farms, like several others in the parish, but the two have been one for very many years.

"Nosweithiau Llawen," or "Gwestau," which we have rendered as "merry evenings," were very common in this parish at one time, and were held in the various farmhouses and summer dwellings of the parish. The young people of the district, far and near, used to gather to these meetings, and, unless something very important kept them, they never dreamt of being absent. The frequent and disorderly fairs are now their substitutes.

A "noswaith lawen" was being held on one occasion at Bwlch Mwrchan, into which the young people had gathered from every direction, until the house was literally packed, but the night happened to prove an extremely stormy one. The wind was whistling and howling in the woods, and tearing the trees like match-sticks, while it roared like deafening thunder in the passes above. Llyn Gwynen, near the house, boiled like a boisterous sea: its waters were lifted up by raging winds, and thrown down again, like heavy thunder showers, against the house. The night was pitch dark, and shreds of heavy clouds were swiftly floating above the narrow valley, dimly visible, and seeming like terrible and ghastly spectres.

[1] *The Cambrian Journal*, vol. for 1859, p. 213.

It was, in very truth, the "merry evening" of the goblins, and all the elements of nature seemed as if they had been engaged to play their wassail songs.

Owing to the great fierceness of the storm without, the evening was not nearly so merry within as might have been expected. The moanful whistling of the wind, as it squeezed itself through the antiquated walls of the house, the ceaseless roaring of the lake, and the heavy fall of the water hurled on the roof and against the windows, drowned the sound of the harp, terrified the young women, and gave such a melancholy turn to the songs and stories of the men, that they determined to bring the proceedings to a close at a much earlier hour than usual. Before breaking up the meeting, however, the goodman of the house, disappointed with the turn things had taken, was struck with the idea of finding out the bravest of the young men present, and challenged any one of them to go up to the Hafotty in Cwm Merch at that hour, and bring down the halter, farthest from the door, before the company separated.

The Hafotty was over a mile from the house, and the pathway to it was narrow, rugged, and in every way bad. Not one out of the whole number present could pluck up enough courage to accept the challenge, until the women-folk began to taunt them of their cowardice; whereupon a young man from Nant Gwynen accepted it. In spite of the storm, the darkness, the tortuous path, and the precipitous ridges, he managed to reach Cwm Merch. When within a short distance of the Hafotty, he could see a light within, which was somewhat strange, as it was far too late in the year for any one to be there with the dairy work, and the place was too outlandish for any stranger to have lost his way. He went on fearlessly, and, when he had drawn near, he heard the doleful sound of painful moans. He paused and listened, for he thought it might be the wailing of the wind in the creaks of the rocks above. But as he went on the moaning became more distinct, and he understood that the groans were those of a woman in dreadful pain. He hastened to the door, but found it secured from within. He peeped in through some of the cracks, and, to his horror, he could see a woman bound before a great

heap of blazing fire, being roasted alive. He stepped back instantly, and flung himself upon the door with his whole might, sending it spinning into the middle of the Hafotty, and as swift as thought he cut the woman loose from the bonds that held her before the fire. He then looked round for the two men whom he had seen torturing her, but both had disappeared, and could not be seen anywhere. He took the woman in his arm, and led her down to Bwlch Mwrchan, where he introduced her to the old man with the words, "This is the halter that I found in the Hafotty. Do you recognise it?"

He then told the company all that had happened, and at daybreak they all went in search of the two monsters. They found their bodies at the foot of a steep cliff, stone dead. In their flight they had stumbled against one another in the dark, and had been thus hurled headlong over the steep ridge. The woman soon recovered from her injuries, and joined hands in blessed matrimony with her brave deliverer. Children were born to them of a goodly number, whose descendants make up the majority of Nant Gwynen inhabitants to-day.

This is the origin of the name "Cwm Merch" ("The Hollow of the Maid"), and "Afon y Ferch," from which Edward Llwyd has had his "Ierch."

CHAPTER XVIII

NANT GWYNEN—AROUND LAKE GWYNEN

We must now return through the farmyard of Hafod y Llan, back to the main road. As the materials for this chapter will keep us near the banks of Gwynen Lake, we have headed it to that effect.

Glanaber.—The first house we come to, after leaving Bethania, is the Lodge of Plas Gwynant, on the right. The house which stands on a high elevation, a few yards farther

on, is Snowdon View. This is where Mr. Robert Owen resides, who was so well known to thousands as the manager and proprietor of the Summit Hotel, up to a couple of summers ago. Snowdon View was, a very short time ago, nothing but a small old-fashioned cottage, known as Penrhiw Goch; but it was even then attractive, on account of its beautiful situation. Mr. Owen has let his interests in the Summit Hotel on a lease to the Snowdon Tramway Company, and caters at Snowdon View for such as care for a quiet holiday. Several gentlemen find this an ideal retreat from the heat and bustle of towns and cities. Some of the Rev. W. J. Dawson's books have been fashioned and finished at this charming place.

The row of houses, together with the School and Post Office, which we come to about four hundred yards beyond Snowdon View, is called Glanaber. These dwellings were all built, on the leasehold system, about twenty-seven years ago, and have taken the place of some of the old cottages on the hill-sides. The school was built a little over twenty years ago, and did away for ever with the primitive institution which found a home above the ceiling of Bethania Chapel. The Post Office serves the present generation with a daily delivery and despatch, and a constantly used telegraph.

Bryn Gwynant.—On the right-hand side of the road, just where we come into sight of the charming Llyn Gwynen, stands Glan Gwynant, a pretty little summer residence of the Vawdreys. It is sometimes let during the winter and part of the summer, and its situation gives every attraction that a summer residence claims, except proximity to a railway station —an advantage which is not missed much in the summer.

Bryn Gwynant, the residence of J. W. Wyatt, Esq., is hidden from the road by a luxuriant growth of plants, shrubs, and trees; but a little wicket gate, about two hundred yards from Glan Gwynant, betrays its existence behind the high wall and the well-kept hedge. The estate of Bryn Gwynant was once known as Pen y Bryn, a name still preserved by one of Mr. Wyatt's cottages in the woods above the house. It was sold by the Wynns of Wynnstay to a gentleman of the name of Doulben, in 1803, at the same time as Mr. Vawdrey bought

the estate of Plas Gwynant. Mr. Doulben's descendants sold it to the late Rev. Hugh Wynne Jones, Tre Iorwerth, in 1809, from whom the late Mr. James Wyatt, and his cousin, Mr. Daniel Vawdrey, bought it in 1832, dividing it into equal shares after the purchase.

Bryn Gwynant overlooks the lake, a large portion of which belongs to the estate, and commands a complete view of the

(*Dawkes and Partridge, Wells, Photo.; from a Drawing.*)

Bryn Gwynant.

valley up to the Glyders. Its grounds are most tastily arranged, and beautifully kept, and are surrounded by a fine plantation.

One does not often meet with gentlemen who have drunk deeply of the spirit of their surroundings, if it so happens, as it frequently does, that the language and customs of the people among whom they settle are different from their own. But Mr. Wyatt is thoroughly in touch with everything most dear to the people of Nant Gwynen, and in this he resembles the grandfather, whose heir he is. He takes a keen interest in every trace of the past, which comes to light on his estate.

The late James Wyatt, Esq., lived at Lime Grove, in the lower part of the western side of Penrhyn Park, when he effected the purchase of Bryn Gwynant. P. B. Williams writes in the most eulogistic terms of his father, Benjamin Wyatt,[1] whom he succeeded as agent of the Penrhyn estate. The same love of improvements that distinguished the father, as well as the ability to effect them, characterised the son; and so marked were the improvements which were made in the Bryn Gwynant and Plas Gwynant estates by the late Rev. H. Wynne Jones, Mr. Wyatt, and Mr. Vawdrey, that one of the Wynns of Wynnstay could hardly believe that Nant Gwynen was the same valley as the one with which his family had once been connected.

Within the Bryn Gwynant grounds are two things of interest to the antiquarian—a piece of an old Roman bridle path, which Mr. Wyatt means to clear up, and an old stone to which travellers fastened their horses, while they refreshed themselves at the old public-house of Pant Parlleni. The former is a strip of the well-known paved way of the Romans, and the latter is a large block of stone running to a point at the upper end, and may be seen on the left-hand side of the drive, as one goes towards the house. Tradition has not preserved sufficient detail to identify the spot where stood the public-house, but we cannot be far wrong in placing it a few yards higher up the slope than the bridle post. This public-house was inevitable, since a chapel belonging to a monastery stood close by. It was very much resorted to by the young people of the district, and whenever a *noswaith lawen* took place in any of the houses up this end of Nant Gwynen, a large party would always meet here before adjourning together to the appointed place.

Mr. Wyatt has in his possession a few curios of great interest. The first is an old oak club, made much in the shape of a cricket bat, but without the use of a plane, measuring about three feet three inches. It was found about seven feet below the surface of a bogland, just above the hard soil, while draining on a part of the land some thirty-three years

[1] See *Tourist's Guide to Carnarvonshire*, pp. 32-38.

ago. The late Mr. Wyatt thought that he had discovered one of the weapons of the fighting Britons, but it was probably used for beating dry washed clothes, which were too heavy to wring. When first found it was as heavy as lead; but after lying in a dry place for a time, it has become quite light.

Another relic of the past is a very perfect lower mill-stone, which Mr. J. W. Wyatt found some four or five years ago, while excavating behind an old cottage on the estate, called Pen y Bryn. Its shape is almost a regular hexagon, with an edge of one and a half inches, a thickness of five inches, and a diameter of twelve inches. It has the usual hole in the middle, and a perfect lip. Mr. Wyatt has also been fortunate enough to secure an old candlestick, used for holding the old rush candles, and a ladle for melting the tallow for making them. Both of these belonged to Evan Lloyd, Hafod Lwyfog. The candlestick is marked with E. L., 1638.

It was on this estate the earliest experiments in using up waste land for plantations were made. The pioneer in this valuable work was the Rev. H. Wynne Jones, who gave the benefit of his experience in an address before "The Carnarvonshire Agricultural Society" in the year 1814, which he afterwards printed under the title of *Planting in Mountainous Situations*. An extract may be interesting:—

In the month of May, 1809, I took possession of the farm of Penybryn, in the parish of Beddgelert, consisting of about 550 acres. By the month of March, 1810, I had enclosed about 60 acres with a wall six feet high, and 218 roods in length, and immediately planted a considerable part of it with 50,000 Scotch fir, and 10,000 oak and ash. In the year 1811 I enclosed 30 acres more, with a wall the same height as the former, 126 roods in length; and in this and the two following years I planted 103,000 trees in these enclosures; 97,000 of these were oak, and 8000 ash, all of which were raised by myself; the remainder were Scotch fir and larch, which I purchased as two-year old seedlings. The whole cost of the enclosures was £109, 10s., and that of planting did not amount to £200. Thus has a plantation of upwards of 90 acres been formed at the trifling expense of £300, or about £3 per acre, including all charges. Such an undertaking would have been ruinous to a person in my circumstances, if it had been conducted in the usual manner. I therefore adopted a plan, which is not attended with one-tenth part of the expense usually

incurred, and which, I am happy to say, has answered my most sanguine expectations; and I will venture to assert that a few more years will dispel whatever prejudices may exist against it in the minds of some members of this Society.

Mr. Jones, at the end of his short paper, gave some details as to his method of preparing a special plot of ground for sowing acorns, from which, in two years' time, he got 100,000 plants as the result of sowing 24 bushels of acorns; and then showed how a good workman could put down as many as 500 of these plants per day. No one can question the success of his method, since the fruit of his plans and labours is still in evidence.

There used to be an old house on this estate called Beudy Cae Gwyn, which was quite unique in its arrangement, as far as this part of the world is concerned. It was a long, old building, with two chimneys in one of its side walls, and a door—the only door—at the northern end. Between the door and the first fireplace, the cattle and the pigs found their place of shelter and rest; between the two fireplaces the family had their beds; and between the second fireplace and the far end the family lived and did their housework. We are told that the last family that lived in it were very respectable people, and by no means badly off in the world. This and another old house, called Cae Gwyn, are now in ruins.

Capel y Nant.—After passing Bryn Gwynant, we see on the same side of the road a small house with gable windows, which is called Yr Hen Gapel. The plot of ground between it and the road is of great historical interest, though a good deal of its history is wrapt in obscurity. This is the site of the old chapel known as Capel y Nant, which was doubtless the property of the Abbot of Aberconway. The grounds surrounding it belonged to that monastery, as we have seen from the old charter already quoted; and it seems to us that the popular notion that it belonged to the Priory of St. Mary, at Bedd Gelert, is impossible.

In fact, this chapel at Nant Gwynen was intended to be a handle to the securing of the Bedd Gelert Priory and its possessions, by the Abbot of Aberconway. As the quotation,

which we have already used in our chapter on the Priory, from Newell shows, the Cistercians were an exceedingly ambitious order of monks, and one article in their creed was the extension of their own power and dominion, at the expense of other orders. The grant of these lands in Snowdonia must have delighted their hearts, as it brought their claims almost to the very doors of the Bedd Gelert Priory; their land reached to the river Colwyn, and only that river itself separated the hostile orders. It was only "after much trouble and expense that the Snowdon monks obtained letters of protection from the Pope." As the monastic house of Dolwyddelen belonged to Bedd Gelert, and the priests of St. Mary had to serve there, they must have occasionally come into collision with the priests that came from Aberconway to serve at Capel Nant Gwynen, until at last the letters of protection from the Pope came to blunt the weapons of the more violent Cistercian priests.

The tradition of the district, which has almost become history, attributes the erection of this chapel to the munificence of Prince Madoc, the peace-loving son of Owen Gwynedd, who is said to have resided in the neighbourhood. This is quite probable, and it is equally probable that the Bedd Gelert priests served here for a short time, at the special request of Madoc; for the grant of this district was not made by Llewelyn the Great until 1198, twenty-eight years after Madoc had sailed for America. When the Abbot of Aberconway got possession of it, he used it to weaken the influence of the Bedd Gelert Priory, and to push on his propaganda. After the dissolution of the monasteries it was neglected, and became so dilapidated that it soon fell into ruins. Sir John Williams, the London goldsmith who presented St. Mary's church with a communion service, in 1610 rebuilt it at his own expense, and endowed it with £5 a year, so as to secure the services of the officiating clergyman of Bedd Gelert. In the year 1693, when Edward Llwyd passed through the neighbourhood, the chapel stood intact. It is in the sense of rebuilding that Sir John Williams is called "the founder of a chapel in Nanhwynen" in the note on p. 87 of *The History*

of the Gwydir Family,[1] as the Oxford antiquarian proves. "Three times was Gwynen Chapel founded."[2]

Whatever sacredness belonged to the Catholic chapel, it was never consecrated after its reconstruction by Sir John Williams, and Edward Llwyd implies that the spot was never consecrated. "Three times was Gwynen Chapel founded, and according to the prophecy of Robin (or Dafydd) Ddu it is still, and always will be, unfinished, that is unconsecrated." This statement is confirmed by the fact that only one body is known to have been buried here at all, and that was the remains of a suicide. Several of the older people of the last generation remembered seeing a stone slab in the graveyard, marking the place of his burial; it was only destroyed at the beginning of this century, when the present road was made through Nant Gwynen. The broken stone was placed over the gutter which runs under the road, at a place lying between Hen Gapel and the old ruin of Belan Wen. It has been asserted that the chapel was consecrated, and that several will face the proceedings of the Last Day from there; we have found no evidence for that assertion, but rather to the contrary. The roof was on the building as late as a hundred years ago, and it only fell in after being compelled by heavy storms to yield its covering, slate after slate, and the rain had soaked its timber to decay. Most of the serviceable articles of the old chapel were carried down to Bedd Gelert church. One article was a fine old oak door, into which not a single nail had been driven; and another article was the sonorous old bell which invited the worshippers to the service, from St. Mary's belfry, for very many years. It was inscribed with the name of Sir John Wynn of Gwydir, whose gift it must have been. These were sold, along with a large quantity of other valuable materials, at the time of the so-called renovations of 1830.

It is only about eighty-three years since the old ruin was pulled to pieces by the father of Mr. William Humphrey, Pant Parlleni, to build the present house therefrom, on behalf of the Rev. H. Wynne Jones. We do not know what arrange-

[1] Askew Roberts's edition.

[2] *Cambrian Journal*, vol. for 1859, p. 215.

ment was made between the Rev. Mr. Jones and the parishioners with regard to the stones of the old chapel; we find no entry bearing upon it in the vestry book. The house was built on a piece of ground immediately above the old ruin, just outside the graveyard wall. The first tenant was the late William Wmffre (or Humphrey), who entered his new home with his young wife about a twelvemonth before his eldest son was born. That son is the Mr. Humphrey mentioned above, who still lives at the ripe old age of eighty-three.

Before the year 1834, the late Mr. Wyatt had a very small strip of land between the road and the old chapel grounds, but he surrendered this for a piece of the same dimensions from the southern portion of those grounds, and thus turned that strip to service on his own property. The churchwardens and overseers made Mr. Wyatt responsible for any consequences which might have arisen from the exchange, charged him with the value of the trees which grew on the plot given by them in exchange, and left on him the expense of constructing and removing all walls and fences.

The following entry, in the vestry book of the parish, proves that Hen Gapel was a source of some income to the parishioners. "At a special vestry meeting it was passed that Messrs. John Owens, Hafod Lwyfog, and Robert Williams be hereby authorised to cut down the Trees in the old Chapel of Nant Gwynen, and sell the same—the money to go towards purchasing a hearse—and let the ground at a yearly rent to the tenant of Hen Gapel." This was on June 14, 1877.

On May 8, 1878, it was resolved "That the Parishioners of the Parish of Beddgelert do concur with the Vicar of Beddgelert in selling to James Wyatt, Esq., of Bryn Gwynant, at the price of £200, a plot of land containing twenty perches, more or less, situate in Nant Gwynen, in the above Parish, and known as Hen Gapel, and that the said purchase money of £200 be divided equally between the Parishioners and the Vicar."

Mr. Wyatt's legal papers and documents are before us, and from these we find that the area of the ground concerned is exactly 556 square yards, and that the purchase involved him

in £25 more than the actual money paid to the vicar and churchwardens. It is very probable that the resolution of the parishioners, to cut down the trees in front of his house-property, stirred Mr. Wyatt to make the purchase. We may safely guess that the vicar only had the use of his £100 once, but the parishioners used theirs over and over again. It is amusing to see how this £100 had to do service in all cases of emergencies in parish affairs, and how it cropped up every now and again in the pecuniary transactions of the overseers and churchwardens. It may be still doing service for all we know.

How the Big Bible was restored.—There is a tradition current in the parish of the sudden disappearance of the "Big Bible" of Capel y Nant, and of its restoration after some lapse of time, in an equally sudden manner.

The old chapel had been abandoned and neglected for a very long time; the rain was entering freely through the roof, the wood-work and the seats were rotting away, and all the books had been taken to Bedd Gelert, with the exception of the "Big Bible," which had been left on the reading-desk. Robert Roberts, Clogwyn, Nanmor, happened to be passing that way one very wet day, and turned into the porch to shelter from a sudden shower. Finding the door open, he went into the chapel and saw the "Big Bible," white with damp and mildew. Seeing that the book was useless there, and that it was rotting away, he took it loose from the chain which held it, put it under his coat, and walked home with it. Doing a dishonest thing was as far from his mind as the poles are separate from each other, because Robert was one of the finest old characters in the parish. He found its fine large print a boon to his failing eyes, and no doubt got immense good from constant perusal.

After some years, Robert passed away, and before very long something began to trouble the family very much. They could see him strutting about the house and on the roads, footpaths, and fields, night after night. At first the ghost was rather shy, but its diffidence soon passed away, and it became a sore trial to the family. A man of the name of

Griffith Richard happened, quite accidentally, to pass by Clogwyn one evening, and met the ghost. Recognising it as that of Robert Roberts, he asked it whatever did it mean by appearing thus in the dark to frighten timid people. "My dear Guto," said the ghost, "I am glad to have met thee. I took the big Bible from Capel y Nant, and it refuses to give my bones rest. Tell Nelly to take it back." The first thing next morning the Bible was put into a canvas bag, and taken back to the very place from which it had been removed. Thus did Robert Roberts's bones find rest, and the family peace from his visits.

Madoc, Discoverer of America.—We have a very interesting tradition connected with this part of Nant Gwynen, which relates to the discovery of America, in the twelfth century. Madoc, the son of Owen Gwynedd, was a prince of very peaceful disposition, and fond of quiet pastimes; one of these was fishing, whether in lake or sea. As he owned the valleys and mountains of Eryri, he took advantage of their charming seclusion, and made his abode in this neighbourhood, near the banks of Llyn Gwynen. He owned a large number of ships, which he built at Aberglaslyn, for the purpose of fishing in Traeth Mawr—the land between the Portmadoc embankment and Aberglaslyn Bridge, which was reclaimed by Mr. Madocks in 1811. His continual sailing up and down the Traeth developed in him a passion for the sea, with the result that he built larger ships lower down the river, in which he used to cruise in the open bay.

Wales was very restless in his days, and the feuds of the princes wearied him beyond endurance. Rather than draw the sword to restore peace, he sailed out to the open sea in great disgust, to seek for a new home. He took with him the flower of the youth of the neighbourhood and surrounding country, and as he was well provided with food, he directed his course to the west. After a fairly successful journey, he came to a strange country, which so favourably impressed him that he left his men there, and returned home to Wales. With deep earnestness he pointed out to his fellow-countrymen the rocky and mountainous nature of the wilds, for which they

were murdering one another, described the boundless riches and freedom of the new country, which he and his men had discovered, and exhorted them to join him and make for the country where they might live in peace and plenty.

Ten vessels were fitted up and filled with emigrants. Madoc then sailed away, and was never heard of again. The place from which they sailed is called "Ynys Fadog" ("Madoc's Island") to this day. It is the last hillock on the

Llyn Gwynen

right-hand side of the road, in going from Portmadoc to Tremadoc. Madoc's departure is reckoned in the triad as one of "The Three Losses, by Disappearance, of the Isle of Britain.—First, Gavran, son of Aeddan, with his men, who went to sea in search of the Green Islands of the Floods, and nothing more was heard of them. Second, Myrddin, the Bard of Ambrosius, with his nine scientific Bards, who went to sea in the house of glass, and there have been no tidings whither they went. Third, Madog, son of Owain Gwynedd, who, accompanied by three hundred men, went to sea in ten ships, and it is not

known to what place they went." It is said that the first lot of ships numbered thirteen; it is to the second departure, three years later, the triad refers.

Attempts have been made to discover the descendants of Madoc's emigrants, and Catlin felt convinced that he had discovered them in the Mandans, while others think they must be the Padoucas. The late Thomas Stephens, Merthyr Tydfil, in his "Essay on Madoc," throws discredit on the whole story; but there can be no denying that the tradition has taken deep root in the Welsh mind and imagination. There is hardly anything in Welsh more pathetic and heroic than the story of John Evans of Wannfawr, near Carnarvon, the young man who determined to follow the Missouri, until he would find the Welsh Indians, so that he might preach to them the everlasting Gospel of Christ. He left his Welsh friends, and followed the course of the Missouri for sixteen hundred miles, after which he took fever and died. The Spaniards had taken him prisoner at St. Louis, but a certain Mr. Jones secured his release from there. A gentleman by the name of Judge Turner, who knew something of him, helped him in the district of Cahokia and Chascaske, and got him some passes which smoothed his course all along his journey. He had made up his mind not to return until he had reached the source of the great Missouri, but it was not to be, so that his missionary zeal and enthusiasm, his passion and thirst for the spiritual welfare of his own brethren in America, must be taken for the deed.

The story of Madoc appeals irresistibly to poets, and Southey has written no less than forty-five cantos on the subject. Mrs. Hemans's "Prince Madoc's Farewell" deserves the ample praise which Welshmen everywhere bestow upon it, and it is just a nice length for quotation.

Why lingers my gaze where the last hues of day
  On the hills of my country in loveliness sleep?
Too fair is the sight for a wanderer, whose way
  Lies far o'er the measureless worlds of the deep!
Fall, shadows of twilight! and veil the green shore,
That the heart of the mighty may waver no more!

Why rise on my thoughts, ye free songs of the land
Where the harp's lofty soul on each wild wind is borne?
Be hushed, be forgotten! for ne'er shall the hand
Of minstrel with melody greet my return.
No! no!—let your echoes still float on the breeze,
And my heart shall be strong for the conquest of seas!

'Tis not for the land of my sires to give birth
Unto bosoms that shrink when their trial is nigh;
Away! we will bear over ocean and earth
A name and a spirit that never shall die.
My course to the winds, to the stars, I resign,
But my soul's quenchless fire, O my country! is thine.

"Dr. Rowland Williams, of *Essays and Reviews* renown," says Ceiriog, "has also a pretty lyric to 'Prince Madoc at Sea.'" It contains four verses addressed by Madoc to his little boy, who is sleeping, while "the rude surge foamed on his pillow." We quote the last verse:—

The night is dark, but the day will rise;
Let us go where fortune may bear us,
To happier lands, beneath brighter skies,
Where the foe no longer may scare us:
Then pleasantlie, my child,
Thou'lt wander in the wild,
Although fair Gwyneth's prince no more,
Rejoicing in the free untrodden shore.
Lays from the Cymric Lyre, p. 11.

But, to our mind, nothing surpasses Ceiriog's own verses on "Llongau Madog" ("Madoc's Fleet"), of which the Welsh reader is never tired. They have been set to music by Mr. John Thomas, Queen's Harpist, and by Mr. David Jenkins, Mus. Bac., from whose Male Voice Chorus we take Dr. Howells Talgarth's lilting translation:[1]—

Thirteen vessels sail away
From Cambria's shore one summer's day;
Dauntless Madoc—none more meet—
Is captain of that mimic fleet;
O'er the sea! to make their own
A land to human eye unknown;

[1] With Mr. D. Jenkins's kind permission.

Deadly perils must they brave,
But God will guard from wave to wave.

Day's bright sun and night's sweet star,
Safe guiding all, their guardians are;
Western whirlwinds rise in wrath,
And giant billows throng their path.
On the seamen speed their way,
By tempest nursed, 'mid surf and spray,
Destined 'neath a foreign sky,
For weal or woe, to live and die.

Thirteen vessels woo the bay,
Of stranger coast one summer's day;
Cries of sailors reach the strand,
A year at sea, they're shouting LAND!
Chanting song-notes wild and free
On new-found shores of western sea;
Peace to all they gaily sing,
And hail each comrade as a king.

The Old Roman Bridge and Wenallt.—Moving onward, the road leads us past an old ruin on the same side of the road as Hen Gapel, which is known as Belan Wen. Two families lived here at one time, one of which kept a corn-kiln, to which all the farmers of Nant Gwynen brought their corn. These corn-kilns were of a simple structure, having a floor of partially perforated tiles on the top and a furnace below, fed by dried furze and sticks. As we can find no trace of the kiln, we conclude that it must have been built inside the house, and pulled to pieces when it became useless.

There is nothing of any note connected with Bryn y Cwt, a little higher up than Belan Wen, which is also in ruins.

We now come to the out-houses of Hafod Lwyfog, on the left-hand side of the road, by which an old road, which runs through this part of Nant Gwynen, branches off to Hafod y Rhisgl. Turning into the first field on our left, from that old road, we cross over to the little river on the other side of the valley. At the upper end of the second field we come to an old Roman bridge, which by to-day bears but few traces, if any, of its Roman origin. Up to seven years ago one of the three arches, which it once had, was standing, and it is to be

deeply regretted that that was allowed to fall. Since then the property of Hafod y Rhisgl has changed hands, but Mr. Taylor's love of antiquities may be stronger than that of the noble Baronet of Baron Hill, so that we need not despair of finding Mr. Mainwaring and Mr. Taylor joining in the expense of restoring the fallen fabric, while memories are fresh enough to produce a plan of the identical arch.

Three of the butments remain, but they differ nothing from

Llyn Gwynen. The Old Roman Bridge. (From Wenallt.)

dozens of other mortarless butments of comparatively recent bridges. The first part we cross is now filled up with stones; the second part is spanned by two wooden rails, joined by boards which resisted our weight in the early spring of last year, but which had given way under some one before our second visit, two months later. The farthest end is made in the old British style of throwing the two ends of long thick stones on the butments.

The Roman bridle path from Dinorwic passed over this old

relic, coming through the Pass of Llanberis over Gorphwysfa, down past Cwm Dyli by the side of the river, and through the land of Hafod y Rhisgl, until it crossed over at this point. It then kept under Gallt y Wenallt, along the brink of Llyn Gwynen, behind the hill between Bwlch Mwrchan and the lake, passing Bwlch Mwrchan, and fording the river right in front of that farm. Thence it passed Plas Gwynant and joined the Segontium road—which we have already traced to the Bridge of Aberglaslyn—beyond Blaen Nanmor. It need not puzzle any one to find this path in Blaen Nanmor and Nant Gwynen, as the traces are well defined. The traces of an old road, which are pointed out by the out-houses of Hafod Lwyfog, are not the traces of a Roman road, but of the old continuation of the Hafod y Rhisgl road.

About two hundred yards below the bridge, we find two objects of interest, now seldom referred to except by some of the older inhabitants. One is a well of delicious water, bubbling forth a perennial supply of water in sufficient quantity to turn a heavy mill-wheel. The other is a little nook behind two slender ash trees, in which a whole host of birds shelter over night. It is a hollow place, not unlike a small cave, made of huge fallen stones, naturally wedged together, having a ledge of two feet deep, right in its very centre. This place is called "Pwlpud John Thomas," after one of the early preachers of the Calvinistic Methodists. John Thomas lived at Llanberis, and was the founder of the cause now worshipping at Capel Coch. He was timid and of a melancholy temperament, but most earnest and hard-working. Many a good story is still current about him. He preached at this spot to the people of the valley, long before they gave thought to the idea that it was a long way to the village, and even before periodical services were arranged for in the various farmhouses of this part.

Immediately above the bridge, on the same side of the river, once stood the old mansion of Wenallt. We feel fairly well satisfied in our own mind that this was the abode of Prince Madoc, during his stay in Nant Gwynen. In the *History of the Gwydir Family*[1] mention is made of Cadwaladr

[1] Askew Roberts's edition, pp. 80, 81, 85, 87.

Wynn, the son of Meredith, the son of Ieuan ab Robert, the hero of "Ogof Elen." Meredith made a will, dated March 1525, in which he left his estate to certain trustees to divide among his four sons. The part that fell to Cadwaladr was "Wenallt in Nanhwynen," and, in mentioning this fact, it is also stated that Cadwaladr was several times Member of Parliament.

As this family descended in direct line from Owen Gwynedd, Madoc's father, they would hold the old mansion of Wenallt with peculiar reverence. The house has been completely demolished, and the stones have been carried to build out-houses for Hafod y Rhisgl. One of its subordinate buildings was standing far into the present century, and inhabited as long as its condition permitted. One name of great esteem is connected with this dwelling—that of Hywel Gruffydd, the bard, who figured considerably in the life of the district during his day. We have already met him in the ghost story of David Prichard. Hywel has the distinction of having been married in white, instead of the common homespun, the usual garb of the nuptial day. He and his intended were in service at Hafod y Rhisgl, and had been offered a pair of their master's horses for their wedding day. They rode down to church in the old Welsh style, through a steady fall of snow, and were led to the altar in the white of nature. "It was quite becoming," says one who knows something of his transparent character and pure verse.

Only the lower part of the foundation of this cottage now remains, for its materials have been put to a similar use to those of the mansion. The occupants were naturally in constant danger from stones rolling down from above, and it is said that about a hundred years ago, while the family were at dinner, a huge boulder fell in through the roof. One of the lads had been displeased with something, and had got up from the table, plate in hand, and was standing near the middle of the floor. A sudden noise was heard at the back of the house, and the next second the immense stone fell in through the roof with a crash, hit the plate out of his hand, and left him crying because his meat was gone. The stone

was too big to get out through the door, so there was nothing for it but to bury it in the floor, and there it remains to the present day.

CHAPTER XIX

NANT GWYNEN—UPPER PART

Hafod Lwyfog.—Hafod Lwyfog stands not many hundred yards higher up the road than the out-houses, by which we turned down to the Roman bridge. It is called Hafod Lwyfog "because there are elm trees there," says Edward Llwyd. Some of the old poets have called it Hafod Lwy*ddo*g, and that form is explained on p. 294. On the beam which runs under the parlour ceiling are the letters $\frac{\text{E. LL.}}{\text{E.}}$ 1638, but the house is at least eighty years older than that date would lead one to think. The initials are those of Ifan Llwyd (or Evan Lloyd) and his wife, and their crest is still preserved on the end wall of the same room. The green mounds about the house, and the traces of artificial walks and drives around them which may still be seen, speak of days when taste and expenses were applied to the beautifying of this residence. The hand of time, the rusticity of many of the past tenants, and its having become exclusively a farm, have very successfully co-operated in obliterating those traces of taste and refinement.

It was at Hafod Lwyfog, we are told, that Sir John Williams, the goldsmith, was born. His father was William, the son of John Coetmor, the twenty-third offspring of Meredith ab Ievan ab Robert, Gessailgyfarch. John Williams's grandfather was, therefore, a brother to Cadwaladr Wynn, Wenallt. How William Coetmor came to reside at Hafod Lwyfog, we do not know; but we know that Nant Gwynen belonged to his uncle, Cadwaladr. Evan Lloyd, above

mentioned, was a direct descendant of Humphrey, Cadwaladr Wynn and John Coetmor's brother.

Sir John Williams went up to London when quite a young man to try his fortunes in the Metropolis, and accumulated a considerable fortune at an early age. Though he had early left Nant Gwynen, he had drunk deeply of its spirit, and neither Metropolis life nor the making of money was able to

(*With Mr. O. M. Edwards's Permission.*)

Hafod Lwyfog.

take that spirit out of him. "He was a distinguished collecting antiquary," and is known in English literature as the man who furnished Michael Drayton, the poet, with such an abundance of fact and fiction about Wales and with the posthumous papers of Leland. This fact explains Bishop Nicholson's surprise that Drayton's *Polyolbion*, that "strange herculean" work, "should contain a much truer account of this kingdom and the dominion of Wales than could well be

expected from the pen of a poet." The reader will find a reference to Sir John Williams in a letter from Bagford to Hearne, prefixed to the first volume of Leland's *Collectanea*.[1]

His work on Nant Gwynen Chapel, and his gift of a communion service to the Church of Bedd Gelert, bespeak his religious tendencies; and his bequeathment of his large collection of books and manuscripts to the library of Jesus College, Oxford,[2] shows that he was fully alive to the value of literary productions, which he was unwilling to leave to the mercy of chance and ignorance. He had three sons, all of whom became titled gentlemen. Sir John Williams, Bart., inherited his father's title, and lived in the Isle of Thanet; Sir Edmund Williams, Bart., lived at Marne Hall, Dorsetshire, and was created Baronet in April 1642; while Sir Morris Williams was Physician to the Queen. The assertion that he retired to his native place, to close his life in religious quietude, has not been proved. The parish contains neither a record nor a word of tradition about his residence here after his retirement, and it is very probable that he only came periodically to visit his relatives at Nant Gwynen, and that he breathed his last elsewhere. He was certainly not buried within the parish, or else such a man would have had a tablet put to his memory.

The Evan Lloyd who lived at Hafod Lwyfog in 1638 was the son of John Lloyd, who was the son of Evan Lloyd, the son of Meredith. He was a well-built man, of great courage and strong common sense, and the friend of the poor and oppressed. During the Civil War, he took the side of the Royalists, and stood up for Charles as an uncompromising admirer, though we have no evidence of his having taken any active part in the struggle, apart from the following anecdote. One day a batch of Cromwell's men came by, and, feeling hungry, they turned in to Hafod Lwyfog. Evan Lloyd was out at the time, but was soon acquainted with the fact that they had come, and that they were making free with his house and his food. They had placed their arms on a large table

[1] See *Hist. of Gwydir Family*, p. 87.
[2] There is no record of this in Oxford.

near the door, so he noiselessly picked them up, carried them out, and threw them down the hill below the house. He then returned to the house, and, with his bare clenched fists, began to attack the intruders, and drove them out with a rush through the door. Tradition is silent as to any consequences, and the probability is that when the soldiers got a moment to reflect upon the incident, they admired his pluck too much to do anything more than laugh at it with good-humour.

He was County Sheriff in the year 1670-71, and ten years later his son William enjoyed the same honour. During the last renovations of Bedd Gelert Church, some of the workmen, unknown to the vicar, opened Evan Lloyd's grave for curiosity's sake. His grave had been worked with stones and mortar, was seven feet long, and nearly six feet deep. His bones were in a fair state of preservation, though the skull was partly decayed. What remained of his coffin was mahogany. He died in 1678, in the sixty-seventh year of his age.

All who are interested in Welsh literature are familiar with the name of Elis Wynn, the author of *Bardd Cwsg* — a work which is at present receiving great attention in Wales, and may be read, by the English reader, in Mr. R. Gwyneddon Davies's admirable prize translation. Elis Wynn married the granddaughter of Evan Lloyd, his wife, Lowry, being the second daughter of William Lloyd.

The farm of Hafod Lwyfog is now held by Mrs. Owen, the widow of the late Mr. John Owen, who was one of the keenest farmers of the vale. It is owned by Charles Salusbury Mainwaring, Esq., Gallt y Gaenan, who has inherited it through a series of marriages with female heiresses.

The Ghost of Hafod Lwyfog.—There is an amusing story related about a ghost, or a goblin, which troubled the family of Sion Roland, who occupied Hafod Lwyfog some seventy or eighty years ago, and the story is not only told but believed to this day. We cannot give the entire story, as the ghost troubled them for many months, and an epitome will suffice.

The ghost began to disturb the peace of the house one quiet evening at the very end of harvest time, when the family was gathered around a large blazing peat fire, taking turns in

relating stories, after the manner of the Welsh country folk. They first of all heard something making a rumbling noise upstairs, just above the kitchen, and at once thought of the cats, which, on looking, they found sleeping contentedly enough on the hob. They went upstairs, but there they could neither see nor hear anything. They had no sooner come downstairs than the noise began again, worse than ever. It struck them that it might be a polecat, or something of the kind, and took the dogs up, but the dogs rushed down headlong, madly howling with fright. They now suspected something wrong, and not a single one of them would venture to bed that night, and the noise continued unceasingly until the dawn of the next day. The next evening, and every succeeding evening, it began about the same time, but his doings were more and more daring and his games more and more annoying night after night. One night it seemed as if the ghost were throwing the milk pans about the floor; another night it seemed to be enjoying a clog-dance to the sound of some harp strings. Another night it went into the servant girls' bedroom, lifted up the bed, and dropped it again with a loud crash, and repeated the same thing the night after in the men's room.

One evening, when one of the servant-men was in bed, being overcome with a long stretch of sleeplessness, the ghost was heard entering his bedroom, and the man shouted, "Let me see thy face, thou old coward!" The invisible, uninvited guest moved up to his bed, took hold of his leg, and squeezed it until the man had to shout with all his might, when it vanished. The servant-man was not able to move for a whole fortnight afterwards. About this time the family wanted some tailoring done, but they could get no one to work for them, as the story of the ghost had spread, and every tailor was afraid. There lived, however, about six miles away, a noted old Christian, who sewed from house to house, and who cared not a straw for a goblin nor anything else. They sent for him, and the following Monday he and his apprentice, or assistant, came to work, and, after arriving, proceeded to cut out enough work for the week. When night came on, the ghost promptly began his games, but the tailor was not in the least disturbed:

he went on with his work, and after supper retired like every one else. No sooner had he and his man put out the candle than the ghost entered their room, and began to make an awful disturbance, throwing everything topsy-turvy. They lit the candle, put everything in order again, and went back to bed, leaving the candle lit. The ghost put the candle out, went in under the bed, lifted it up, and dropped it down with a crash. It then took hold of the quilt and dragged it away, in spite of the tailor's efforts to prevent him; the same again with the blanket. At last the mattress was dragged away, and the tailor and his man were thrown into the middle of the floor. The old Christian's faith gave way; he had no shield against ghosts, and with the dawn the next morning he made his escape home, and no amount of money could induce him to return to finish his work.

Several skilled men were sought to drive the goblin away, but they all availed nothing, because they could not discover his genius. At last a person from the neighbourhood of Pwllheli came there, and after a hard struggle "laid the ghost" in the bottom of Llyn Gwynen; and no one has ever seen anything of it since.

The servant-man above referred to vouched for the truth of the whole story to his dying day. It was he who lived last, we believe, in Ty'n y Coedcae, the house now replaced by Sir Edward Watkin's chalet. He explained the presence of the ghost, in later years, in the light of some theft that had been committed by one of the women servants, who revenged her master's punishment of the crime by bewitching his house.

Hafod y Rhisgl and Gwastad Annas.—Hafod y Rhisgl is the farm next to Hafod Lwyfog, but on the old road. It is an old farmhouse, dear to the hearts of all people in Nant Gwynen, as one of the earliest homes of the Gospel in these parts. When the houses of upper Nant Gwynen were occupied, a Sabbath School was regularly kept here, many years before Bethania was first built, and very many years afterwards. The man who thus provided for the moral improvement of the people was William Williams, the man who exchanged his vote for permission to build the Methodist Chapel

in the village. He removed here from Ffridd, Nant Colwyn, in 1804, and from that day to this his house has been one of the most hospitable; for he left a son, Owen, who has left a son, Robert, to carry on his traditions. The itinerant ministers of the Calvinistic Methodists found it an ever open house, both for themselves and the people who crowded to listen to them.

On an old rafter in the hay-loft, which the landlord, during

(*With Mr. O. M. Edwards's Permission.*)

Hafod y Rhisgl.

recent repairs, insisted on replacing, are the following words and letters, "Griffith Powell, 1799," and "W. W., 1800." The latter is probably an intimation of the fact that W. W. farmed Hafod y Rhisgl four years before he removed here to live. One Miss Marsh lived here at one time, and is remembered as having tried, in a kind of religious ecstasy, to imitate Moses in opening the Red Sea with his rod, by walking up to the edge of Llyn Gwynen, striking it with a stick which

she carried, and expecting it to open up so that she might walk through it on dry ground.

Another peculiar character who lived here was William Dafydd (or Davies), an old bachelor, who took it into his head to climb up the side of Gallt y Wenallt once every summer, barefooted. It is no easy task to climb the steep side above the Roman bridge, even when one has nailed boots on; how he managed it barefooted we do not know; but several times he accomplished the task after passing his seventieth birthday.

On the mountain, above Hafod y Rhisgl, stands the ruin of an old watch-tower, of a cylindrical shape, built of loose stones and turf. The place upon which it is built is called Moel y Gysgfa (The Mount of Slumber), which name will be explained presently.

Gwastad Annas is the next house we come to. This was once the home of three families, one of which had a large farm, while the others were able to keep some cattle and a number of sheep. To-day it is only a little mountain cottage, sheltering one family. One of the tenants of the larger farm-house still lives in the memory of the people as a genial old scholar and wit. A man did not require much learning to be considered a scholar in Hugh Dafydd's time, and as he knew a little English, and could use his pen, he was considered one. He kept a school in "the upper room" of Bethania Chapel for some years, and one of his scholars is still living.

Gwastad Annas and the Old City.—After following the old road for a little way beyond Gwastad Annas, we come to a piece of ground projecting out from the slope, opposite which a road turns down on our left. The projecting hillock is called Braich Hafod Owen (The Arm of Hafod Owen), and fronts Cwm Dyli. The road leads down to some old ruins called Muriau'r Dre (The Walls of the City), which stand in two groups of five on elevated ground, with a piece of marsh land between. A semicircular path, enclosed by two traces of walls, joins them, and a wall probably enclosed the ground on its western side. Six—three of each—of these old structures are in a much better state of preservation than the others,

and one or two are nearly vanishing out of sight. In some things these old ruins resemble Mur Murianau and Ceryg Huon, in Nant Colwyn, but they are much more uniform, and have no rectangular enclosures. There is nothing here, either, of the nature of cromlechs, ramparts, or mounds. Whatever was necessary in that way was provided on the hills above.

Some are of opinion that these are the ruins of an old temple of the goddess Andras, and maintain that Gwastad Annas is only a corruption of the Latin *Castra Andraste*. Andras was the goddess of the Passions, and is spoken of by some as being the same as Malen (the Welsh *Hecate*), which was worshipped in some places in the time of the Romans. Boadicea is represented as praying to "Andraste for victory, salvation, and liberty"[1] before engaging in battle with the Romans. "I thank thee, O Andraste! and I will call upon thy name, O kind lady!" But, as we shall see, the argument from the name Gwastad Annas is by no means convincing. It is thought by others that these are only the ruins of an old Roman smelting works, because a large quantity of the refuse of melted copper was found there, while excavating, some forty years ago. Copper may have been smelted here, and no doubt it was; but that does not prove that it was used for nothing else. The copper ore must have been got from the very old works near Capel Curig, as the oldest copper mine in this district—that of Snowdon—is only about one hundred and forty years old.

Local tradition connects the following story with the place. Very many centuries ago, a great host of Irishmen came to this country, and penetrated the Snowdon country as far as the upper end of Nant Gwynen, where the natives met them, and engaged in a bloody fray with them at a place called Bwlch y Gwyddyl (The Pass of the Irish). The Britons were beaten, and driven out of the district before a merciless sword. Having once got rid of the Welsh, the Irish began to build for themselves a strong town in Nant Gwynen, where they might settle down. The Welsh tried several times to drive them

[1] See Principal Rhys's *Celtic Heathendom*, p. 200.

away, but each time without success; for the Irish had placed sentinels on every conspicuous hill for fear of a sudden onset. But one day, as a host of the Welsh were marching up from Dolwyddelen, they found the sentinels of that part sleeping. They fell on them and killed them. Then they made a rush on the Irish below, put them to rout, and pursued them over the mountain which they themselves had just crossed. When near the lakes, between Cribau and Moel Siabod, the Irish were overtaken by the Welsh and annihilated. The joy of the victors over this complete slaughter was so intense that the lakes were henceforth called Llynau'r Dywenydd (Lakes of the Rejoicing), the mountain pass through which the Irish had fled was called Bwlch y Rhediad (Pass of the Flight), and the elevation on which the sentinels were found sleeping was called Clogwyn y Gysgfa (The Ridge of Slumber).

Glasynys[1] gives the following story of "The Town of Nanhwynen," which he has weaved out of his own fertile mind, after the model of the *Genesis* story of Lot. "In the upper part of Nant Gwynen once stood a large town, reaching from near the lake to the foot of the slope below Pen y Gwryd. All the inhabitants were related to one another, and lived a careless and riotous life. There was no sin they did not commit, and there was 'no fear of God before their eyes.' The monks frequently warned and admonished them, but neither frown nor smile served to change them. They gradually became so hardened that they had determined to kill every priest that would approach them. They warned the same not to come near their town; but God's servants gave no heed to that, but, as before, went to warn them to repent. One day, after two monks had been telling them of the threatening vengeance of God for sin, they began to pelt them with stones, and murdered the two on the spot. That night a shining white angel appeared to a certain young maiden, who was of the same kindred as the inhabitants in general, but who had wept bitterly at the sight of such a crime, and told her, 'Hasten, come forth; flee under the shelter of my wing.' She rose up, and departed with her spiritual guardian. After escaping out

[1] In *Cymru Fu*.

of the town, she sat down upon a stone to rest, and when she looked, behold! a shower of fire-sparks falling through in the triple colour of green, blue, and red. 'Fear not,' said the angel, and she fainted; and by the time she recovered consciousness the next morning, Nant Gwynen was but a heap of ashes. She remained in the same place for several days, praying and praising God, and in remembrance of the event, the place to which she had been led for safety was called Gwastad *Annas*, because that was her name."

Then, in a note, Glasynys thinks that Annas stands for Agnes, and that the place should be called Gwastad Agnes. But this is controverted, not only because Glasynys *made* the nicely fitting story, but because another sensible derivation can be given. "Gwastad" (=level ground or land), and "Onnos," an old plural used in these parts for the singular "Onen" (=an ash-tree). If Edward Llwyd's generally accepted view of the derivation of the name of Hafod Lwyfog is correct, it is only natural to suppose that "Onnos" is the original form of Annas, because there was a large number of ash-trees growing there. Edward Llwyd says: "This kingdom was formerly nothing but wilderness, as you know, and there are several places that have received their names from trees (in Wales). At Nanhwynen trees were so thick that a man on a white horse could not be seen from Llyn Dinas to Pen y Gwryd, except in two places, and one of these places has ever since been called Goleugoed."

There is a word in everyday use, among sheep farmers, which means driving up the sheep to the mountains. This word is "annos." In times gone by fences were not much used, and every sheep farmer had his shepherd or shepherds. At certain times in the year, these farmers gathered their flocks to one great centre for the purpose of taking stock, exchanging breeds, buying, and selling. This was also done with goats, as we have already pointed out. It does not seem at all unlikely that the name has originated from this practice, coupled with the fact that new shepherds entering into the service of a fresh master would begin their "annos" work at this place, so as to have a good opportunity of knowing

their sheep before they were driven to the open mountain land.[1]

There is a spot near Penmorfa called Gwastad Annas, which has every likelihood of having been used for that purpose, and the famous Penmorfa Fair may have been established as a substitute, on improved plans, for the periodical sheep gathering.

Cwm Dyli.—Cym Dyli farm is right opposite the old ruins of Muriau'r Dre, near the foot of Cwm Dyli, and by the side of a far-sounding cataract, whose music reaches the opposite side of the valley with a charm that is almost intoxicating. The present cottage only represents the meaner part of the Cwm Dyli farmhouse of long ago. The lower and better portion took fire in the year 1838, and was never rebuilt again, and the real reason for not restoring the homestead is a very worthy bit to add to the evidences taken by the recent Land Commission. Mr. Vawdrey, of Plas Gwynant, after hearing of the disastrous fire and the temporary destitution which followed, went to Cwm Dyli to see what he could do for the family. Seeing their plight, he wrote to Sir Richard Bulkeley, Baron Hill, who owned the place, and gave full particulars of all he had seen. The steward took such an offence at his being ignored, that he did everything to prevent the family from getting a new building, and he secured his eagerly sought, but very miserable, reward of success.

The place was farmed for generations by "the Rhyses of Cwm Dyli," whose name has entered into some of the songs and stories of Eryri. When Pennant visited Cwm Dyli, and dined at the Hafotty with the family on curd and whey, the place was in the hands of Rhys Roberts and his wife, Sian Jones (husbands in Eryri never had the honour in those days of giving their names to their wives; each one retained her own name). Their children were eight in number, all of whom were called, not by the surname of Roberts, but Prys (= ap Rhys), with the exception of Rhys, who was called, after his father, Rhys Roberts. All of Rhys junior's children were

[1] Since the above was written it has occurred to us that Gwastad Annas might stand for Gwastad Danas (The Plain of the Deer).

called by the surname of Roberts, except one daughter, for whom the parents selected the surname of Jones, after her grandmother. This is a fairly good example of a certain method of adopting surnames in this part of the Principality.

When the fire took place, in 1838, the farm was in the hands of the son of Pennant's host, and with him lived his brother, Sion Prys, who was a bachelor. As a new building was not forthcoming at Cwm Dyli, Sion Prys built Penlan—a

Cwm Dyli (in Winter).

house now in ruins in the little hollow leading up to Gorphwysfa—and got his brother to yield some of his land to make it a farm. Banks were not trusted by the peasantry in those days, as they are now, and Sion Prys was one of those who liked to have their banks near them. He kept his valuables in an old trunk, the saving of which from the fire was the one thought and effort of all. An old uncle can sometimes feel glad that he is rich, as he not only gathers around him a group of bright young hopefuls, but gets help when his treasures are

in jeopardy. But, unfortunately for the nephews and nieces, Sion Prys got married, and begat a son and daughter to enjoy the contents of the rescued trunk.

Geufron is also an old ruin on the land of Cwm Dyli, not far from that house, in the direction of Gorphwysfa. This was once an out-house, but was made into a dwelling by one of the members of the Cwm Dyli family, and to this also was granted a portion of the land.

The Hafotty of Cwm Dyli is at the far end of the lovely mountain meadow, which is above the rocky slope behind the house. This was the scene of the annual haymaking still remembered as the happiest and merriest time of the year within the valley. The family spent the hay season in the Hafotty, and brought the cattle and all the dairy utensils with them from the farm, so that Cwm Dyli farm was almost entirely deserted for some weeks every year. One of the old servants says that he can remember nothing more delightful than those Hafotty days, and can conceive of nothing so delicious as the sweet perfume that filled the valley as the early summer sun shone into it.

Cwm Dyli Folk-Lore.—An amusing story is told by Carneddog of the introduction of tea to Cwm Dyli. The story is too long for reproduction, but it tells how Robert Prys bought a new "family drink" at Denbigh fair, how he and his wife experimented in making it when they were alone in the house, and how the old man, warmed up by the mead taken at the close of one of his "harvest home feasts," let the cat out of the bag, when Robert's sister Elin taught the company how to make it—putting to use a little instruction she had got when on a visit to friends, and making for herself a local reputation.

Glasynys has recorded[1] a story connected with Meurig, the shepherd of Cwm Dyli, which gives a legendary explanation to the variety Hafod Lwy*ddo*g for Hafod Lwy*fo*g. "A shepherd once lived at Cwm Dyli, who used to spend his summers among the sheep on the mountains, putting up at night in a dilapidated hut near Llyn Glas. On waking one

[1] In *Cymru Fu*, p. 471.

morning in his rustic hut, he perceived, to his great confusion, a neat, nice-looking girl washing a baby close by him, and noticed that she had scarcely anything wherewith to clothe the shivering little creature. Raising himself on his elbow, he looked at her with a pitying eye, then, stretching out his arm to reach a ragged old shirt of his, he threw it to her and said, 'Take that, poor thing, and wrap it around him.' She took the torn shirt with a thankful heart, and departed. Every evening after this, as regularly as clock-work, he found a silver coin placed in an old disused clog in the hut; and this lasted for years, until Meurig became exceedingly wealthy. He then got married and took Hafod Lwyfog, and everything that he attempted succeeded under his hands, and from this fact was the place called Hafod *Lwyddog* (The Prosperous Hafod), because unrivalled success attended all the efforts of the shepherd of Cwm Dyli. The fairies used to pay their nightly visits to Hafod, and neither the frown of a magician nor the charms of a witch could prevail against the place, for the 'blessings of the fairies' were being distilled in showers upon the family. Thus even after Meurig had moved (from one side of the valley to the other) the fairies brought their gifts all the same, and, naturally enough, Meurig Llwyd and his descendants came to be looked upon as immensely wealthy."

Glasynys follows this up with a delightful poem, giving the love story of Meurig Llwyd's daughter Bronwen and Rhys Cwm Dyli, which was published in *Y Brython*, 1860, and which has been re-issued by Mr. O. M. Edwards, M.A., in *Y Llenor*, January 1898. The poem tells us how Bronwen Llwyd, some two hundred years ago, turned Rhys Cwm Dyli's tender regards for her into an absorbing love while walking, one beautiful morning in the month of May, by the side of Llyn Gwynen. She was followed by her affectionate little dog, and two young lambkins kept running after her, and rubbing themselves about her feet like purring kittens. She was singing a song, the burden of which was "There's sunshine after rain." Something in these words touched Rhys, and her music seemed like that of an angel. Somehow she also began to look upon Rhys as one of some importance in her life, but they were far

enough from one another, so that not a word was spoken about it by either. He sent her a May-pole on the first of May, and a lovely bunch of flowers on Midsummer's Day, every year after that, until one day Llïo, Hafod Llan, twitted Rhys of being a very poor wooer, and that Hywel, of Hafod Ruffydd, was paying his addresses to Bronwen. Rhys's heart sank within him, and he became sad. Two days afterwards, however, healing balm was applied, for Rhys and Bronwen met, and a most tender scene is depicted before us.

The rival Hywel, like a disturbing genius, was then seen making for their accidental meeting-place, for his eyes had watched her course from the opposite hillside. Bronwen had met Hywel before, and he had been unkind to her sister Gwen and herself; so she hastens away, after assuring Rhys that she could not change, and after Rhys had reminded her that "there's sunshine after rain." When Hywel came up to Rhys, he began to talk snappishly, taunting him sarcastically of his fine breed of sheep and cattle, and trying in every way to pick a quarrel with him. Rhys reminds him that he had been glad to receive kindnesses at the hands of his family, when his cattle had nothing to graze on at Hafod Ruffydd. We know not where the quarrel might have ended, if old Meurig Llwyd had not been seen making towards them, and Hywel was most anxious that Meurig Llwyd should hear nothing of the quarrel, and so begged of Rhys to show no suspicion of unpleasantness.

The old man instinctively caught the situation, and, by a kind of intuition, found out that they were rivals. He invited the two to Hafod Lwyfog, where they might talk merrily, about whatever was next to their heart, over their glass of mead. Hywel at once opened out his heart to the old man, and told him of his anxious love of Bronwen. Rhys walked on heedlessly, picking wild strawberries as he went, and hearing the sweet refrain ringing in his ears :—

> However dark the clouds may be, there's sunshine after rain.

Meurig Llwyd invited Hywel to his garden, where a pear-tree grew, bearing upon it only two pears. One of these had a spot on it, while the other, a smaller one, was perfect. Both

looked exceedingly beautiful. Hywel was warned that if he did not pluck the right one he had no chance of getting Bronwen. As they entered the garden, two magpies were heard screeching hideously, and Hywel began to hear a long, shrill cry drowning every other sound. He stretched his arm towards the drooping branch, but could not for the life of him get at it; and he imagined that an uncanny satyr was approaching him, with hair dishevelled and eyes aflame, and his sight seemed to have left him. Half fainting, he cried—

My sorrow is my dower—
Another, while I tarried, has robbed me of my flower.

Meurig Llwyd sends for Rhys, feeling conscious that fate, and his own good sense, would enable the shepherd of Cwm Dyli to hit the mark. While he stared, the mellifluous voice of Bronwen fell upon his ears, and his sight seemed to have completely left him; but as his sweetheart struck the refrain—

However dark the clouds have been, there's sunshine after rain,

Rhys stretched forth his hand and picked the right pear, and Meurig Llwyd was thrilled with joy. Bronwen was betrothed to Rhys, and the happy pair was joined together with the blessing of the aged favourite of the fairies.

We will take leave of Cwm Dyli farm and family by giving a translation of a beautiful little pastoral poem by the immortal Ieuan Glan Geirionydd:[1]—

THE SHEPHERD OF CWM DYLI

Scowling clouds are vanished now,
Loved one, ever fair,
Which have veiled Eryri's brow,
Loved one, ever fair.
See! the sun sends forth its beams,
Gilding hill-tops with its gleams,
Let's recall th' Hafotty dreams,
Loved one, ever fair.

[1] See also Edmund O. Jones's *Welsh Lyrics of the Nineteenth Century*, pp. 9-18.

There the rocks o'ershadowing,
Loved one, ever fair,
With the cuckoo's cry shall ring,
Loved one, ever fair,
Snow-white lambkins bleating near,
Cattle lowing by the mere,
Notes of birds our hearts to cheer,
Loved one, ever fair.

But what pleasure will there be,
Loved one, ever fair,
At Cwm Dyli without thee,
Loved one, ever fair?
Morn and eve my soul will pine
For that voice and form of thine,
On the moor with pail and kine,
Loved one, ever fair.

'Mid the city's din and noise,
Loved one, ever fair;
'Mid its merriment and joys,
Loved one, ever fair;
There forget not him who'll be
Shedding longing tears for thee
At Cwm Dyli—dream of me,
Loved one, ever fair.

Llyn Llydaw.—Within Cwm Dyli, which reaches to the foot of the summit, are three very interesting lakes or tarns. The lowest is only a small one, but with certain lights it looks like a basinful of molten silver. This is *Aylwin's* Llyn y Coblynod. The middle lake is Llyn Llydaw, which Pennant describes in the following words:—"A fine lake, winding beneath the rocks, and vastly indented by rocky projections, here and there jutting into it. In it was one little island, the haunt of black-backed gulls, which breed here, and, alarmed by such unexpected visitants, broke the silence of this sequestered place by their deep screams."

The waters of the lake are to-day lower by 16 feet than they were when Pennant saw them. After the Snowdon mine had been opened out so much that the ore could not be despatched fast enough in sacks on men's backs, a horse and cart was found necessary, and the teams of Cwm Dyli were

engaged for the work. But between the cart-road and the mine were the waters of Llyn Llydaw, which filled up that part of the Cwm, so that there was no margin left for a road-way. A raft was constructed, on which the horse and its load were floated from one end of the lake to the other, which worked very well for a time; but one day the men happened to put the load a little too much on one side of the raft, so that after floating it a little way from the shore, the whole concern

(*Drawing by S. M. J.*)

Llyn Llydaw.
(Bwlch y Saethau, and the Summit in the Distance.)

capsized. Fortunately, no human lives were lost, as one of the miners, who happened to be returning from his work, hurried with a boat to the rescue.

After this the Company determined to construct an embankment along the side of the lake, and the contract for that arduous task was taken by the late Mr. David Jones, Prince Llewelyn Hotel, whose first act was to let out 16 feet of this enormous sheet of water. The margin exposed, after this lowering of the waters, revealed an old boat, which was bought by the late Dr. Hughes of Talytreuddyn, Near Dyffryn, for £5.

as an old Roman boat. It was put under the hammer about eighteen years ago, and sold again for a substantial sum. We regret that our source of information does not enable us to trace the whereabouts of the old relic.

The Cave of the Youth of Eryri.—In the steep precipice on the left, near the upper end of Llyn Llydaw, is a cave turned into a remarkably sacred use, which is called the "Cave of the Youth of Eryri." We are told that after King Arthur was slain at Bwlch y Saethau, and had been buried under the huge stone mound at that pass, all his men ascended the peak of Lliwedd, and descended thence to an immense cave in one of the steep ascents of Cwm Dyli. When all had entered into this hiding-place, the mouth of the cave was closed with the loose stones and turf within, a small hole only being left, so that no one except by the merest accident could discover it. The men then gave themselves over to sleep, leaning on their shields, so that they might be in an attitude ready for the second coming of Arthur; for he is expected to return again and restore the British crown to the original Britons, from whom it was taken by alien forces. This expectation is embodied in an old saw:—

> The youth of Eryri, stout of heart,
> Shall win their crown again.

Very many years ago, as the several shepherds of this part were collecting their flocks on Lliwedd, one of the sheep fell on to a ledge of this precipice. The shepherd of Cwm Dyli ventured down to bring it back again, and to his astonishment he saw the mouth of the secret cave close to the very ledge to which the sheep had fallen. A light was burning within, and he ventured to peep into the mysterious cavity, and behold! a numberless host of soldiers all asleep and leaning on their shields, and ready at any moment for the word of command. Seeing them fast asleep, he thought he should like to go in and have a look at them. But, as he was pushing his way in, he knocked his head against a bell which was hanging in the entrance, and this rattled until every corner of the cave was resounding deafeningly. The soldiers to a man

immediately woke up, and as they awoke gave forth a terrific shout. The shepherd got such a fright that he was never well again; and no one has ever since dared to approach even the mouth of the cave.

Llyn Ffynon Las.—Llyn Ffynon Las is at the extreme end of Cwm Dyli, half encircled by steep and pointed cliffs. It is commonly, and quite wrongly, called Glaslyn, from which those who do not know differently derive the name of the river Glaslyn. The name which it bears may be rendered into English as "the Lake of the Green Well"; and it is at once clear that the old name was Ffynon Las (The Green Well), so called on account of the grass-like colour of its waters. The greenish hue of the water is due to the copper ore which is washed down from the rocks above, and which precipitates into the bottom. It is no less than 2000 feet above the level of the sea, and some 500 feet higher than Llyn Llydaw. Among the inhabitants of Eryri, it has always been known as the bottomless lake, and we are told that a plumb-line of 300 feet has failed to touch the bottom. A good deal of folk-lore is connected with this strange lake, some of which we wish to use here.

The Wonders of Llyn Ffynon Las.—In the wonderful "long ago," the inhabitants of the Vale of Conway and the lower part of the parish of Dolwyddelen were sorely troubled by an awful monster which lived in the river Conway, not far from Bettws y Coed. It had caused them very heavy losses, and many attempts were made to kill it; but neither spear, dart, nor arrow could make the slightest impression upon it, so they determined to drag it from there, and place it somewhere safe and out of the way. After a diligent search for such a place, it was found that Llyn Ffynon Las, in Cwm Dyli, was the safest place in the Island. A place having been found, strong iron chains were made, and two of the strongest oxen in the kingdom were secured. When the chains had been placed around the monster, by the help of a cunning woman, it was dragged out of the lake.

Then the oxen proceeded through the parish of Dolwyddelen and through the pass, which has ever since been called Bwlch

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Rhiw yr Ychain (The Hilly Pass of the Oxen), and which is between the extremities of Dolwyddelen and Nant Gwynen. They next reached one of the mountain fields of Gwastad Annas; and it was in this field that one of the oxen dropped its eye through exertion in drawing the monster. This field has been called, on that account, Gwaen Llygad yr Ych (The Field of the Ox's Eye). The pain which the ox suffered in losing its eye was so great that it wept copiously, and its tears made a pool which is even now called Pwll Llygad yr Ych (The Pool of the Ox's Eye). It never dries, though no water rises from the earth nor runs into it, except during rain, for neither does water run out of it. It is a pool "as high as a man's knee."

The monster was then drawn with great effort and labour up through Cwm Dyli, as far as Llyn Ffynon Las, where the chains were loosed, and the monster jumped headlong into the lake. People did not mind its dwelling there, because they had grave suspicions about the lake and about the creatures it contained. They looked at the monster as a kind of a demon, and "under this circumstance it was but meet that it should be permitted to go to its own kind." It was sometimes, after this, seen furiously troubling the lake. All the fish were soon destroyed by it, and even now we are told if any creature happens to fall by any accident into the lake, the monster immediately drags it under the water, and it is seen no more.

Edward Llwyd says[1] that "there is a musical lay which every minstrel cannot perform; its name is Canig Ychain Mannog (Lay of the Mannog Oxen), and is excessively plaintive and as mournful as were the moans of these oxen under the weight of the avange, especially when one of them lost its eye.

"There is a great deal of talk about Llyn Cwm Ffynon Las, not to mention that it never freezes except in one corner, where the peat waters of the clear pools flow into it, and also that it exhibits various awful hues. . . . Nothing will safely float on its waters. I know not for certain whether it would be safe for a bird to fly over it or not. If you throw a hand-

[1] *Cambrian Journal*, 1859, pp. 147, 148.

kerchief into it, it will sink to the bottom. I have heard with my own ears a person say that he had seen a goat making for this lake lest it should be caught, and that as soon as it got into the water, it turned like a teetotum, until it was drowned. . . . Some report that as a certain man was hunting deer in Snowdon, a stag, whilst hotly pursued by the dogs, escaped (as is the custom of stags in self defence) to this lake. The huntsman had only just time to see its antlers disappear in the waters. Granting that the tale is true, which would you allow, that there were demons in the lake, or that the stag was a demon? for it is said in old tales that demons appear even in the form of hares. A woman was seen to come out of this lake to wash clothes, and when that was done she took the clothes, after having folded them, under her arm and went back into the lake. One person, whose brother is still alive and well, saw an angler with a red cap in a boat on this lake, and died not many days afterwards, and he was far from being in good health during those days."

It is thus that Edward Llwyd illustrates the faith of his own time with regard to Llyn Ffynon Las, and even up to a comparatively recent date the people believed in the existence of this monstrous avanc—a species of beaver. Though there is not a fish at present in the lake, men maintained a generation ago that they had seen it boiling as if it were full of salmon. A miner, who worked in the copper mine, gave the following story of his own experience of fishing in Ffynon Las.

"Some forty years ago (it is now over eighty) when I was working in the Snowdon mine, I had one day come out to eat a mouthful of food, and had seated myself on one of the heaps, when I saw things almost exactly like salmons jumping up in the lake, immediately below where I sat. They are immense fish, said I to myself, and away I went for my old fishing-rod to the barracks. I had an excellent fly, made from the feathers of a wren's tail, but they took no notice of it at all. I rushed off to the Hafotty of Cwm Dyli, picked a few light-coloured worms, and placed two of them on my hook. The hook was no sooner in the water than it was seized. By my conscience, how the fish pulled! My rod bent like a whalebone.

I stuck to, and pulled like a horse, and presently up it came. Hoohoo! I shall never forget the sight as long as I live. It was the nearest thing to a toad that I have ever seen, but ever so much bigger. Why, man! it was bigger than the biggest year-old calf in Cwm Dyli. It was making for me with its mouth open like a cave, and showing its teeth in the most awful fashion, until I felt as if I was on the point of going into a fit. It was not long before I was up in the works with the men again. If ever there was a demon that was one."

Another fisherman relates, in real earnest, his experience whilst fishing on one occasion in Ffynon Las. He saw a number of some kind of fish jumping in the water, and soon hooked one of them, as he thought. After a tremendous struggle he succeeded in bringing it to land, but as soon as it touched dry ground, it gave forth such an unearthly scream, that he felt as if his legs had given way under him; so he threw down his fishing-rod, and ran away as fast as he could.

Such are the wonders of Llyn Ffynon Las. The reader may now, if he cares, ascend the summit by the path to the right before coming to the copper mine, which is pointed out by a finger post. This path is arduous, but exceedingly interesting.

The mine has a long history, into which we have dipped with no pleasant impression to our own mind. It was bought by Mr. E. Herzberg Hartmont in 1889, for the sum of £1500, and in eight years he spent £38,000 pounds on it, and was naturally made bankrupt for the sum of £60,000, not long since. The mine has been worked under several different names from time to time, but the name which shall give it fortune has yet to be given to it.

Gorphwysfa. — Descending from the copper mine along what is known as "the Pen y Gwryd path to Snowdon," we come out to the road which joins Capel Curig and Llanberis, at the place called Gorphwysfa (Rest). There are here only a couple of houses and a small hotel—the Pen y Pass Hotel. Where the present houses are, there used to be two large heaps of stones, one of which was completely scattered when the present houses were built, and the other was partly destroyed,

in order to get the stones that were in it. In the one that was wholly destroyed a stone chest or box was found, which, however, contained nothing more sacred than a piece of flint-stone and an old pipe. It does not seem very possible that the pipe was used for anything but smoking, though we are told that smoking is only a habit of recent times. But there are those who stoutly maintain that it was an ancient custom, and that the introduction of tobacco only revived it in the burning of a new weed. The dried leaves of coltsfoot and burdock, formerly used by boys, when light tobaccos were unknown, in initiating themselves into the misty art, may have been the substance with which the soothing pipe was filled. One very old pilgrim told us that he saw the pipe, and that it resembled, in the shape of its bowl, the globe of a lamp, with a nob below.

An Old Roman Pipe.

Edward Llwyd says that when he visited this part—it is now over two hundred years—he witnessed an act that seemed exceedingly strange to him. His guide, when he came to these cairns, walked round one of them nine times, repeating the Lord's Prayer as rapidly as ever he could.

A little below these cairns, on the Llanberis side, there used to be seven or eight long graves, which were scattered when the present high-road was made. Let us now move down towards Pen y Gwryd, and pause for a few minutes at the sharp turning a little way down the road. Just where this turning is in the high-road the great battle between the Welsh and Irish was fought, of which we have already spoken in connection with Muriau'r Dre, and after which it was called Bwlch y Gwyddyl. The little hollow which turns sharply to the left from Nant Gwynen, and climbs up to Gorphwysfa, is called Trawsnant, or the vale that runs cross-wise.

Pen y Gwryd.—Pen y Gwryd stands on the northern

extremity of the parish of Bedd Gelert, and is a welcome house of rest and refreshment at the meeting point of three roads. When first built by John Roberts, Pen y Bryn, it could claim no better name than a mountain cottage, occupied by the erector himself. After Roberts, came a certain Mr. Benjamin from Bethesda, who was followed by the late Mr. Harry Owen, whom Kingsley has made known to all readers of *Two Years Ago*. He was quite a young man when he entered into possession, but his youthfulness proved advantageous to him. He had no experience in the business of catering for tourists, and it was to his wife that he owed his training. He had met her as a tall, delicate-looking maid, in the service of Mr. Coventry, Plas Gwynant, and her life among her social superiors was turned into good use.

Harry Owen developed his unpretending cot into a fairly good country hotel, and attracted well-known men under his roof. Besides developing the hotel business, he also took to some kind of farming, which reflects something quite the opposite to credit on his name. We have already mentioned Gwastad Annas, Cwm Dyli, Penlan, and Geufron, the first two as being only the simple dwellings of one family each, and the second two as being in ruins. All these were thriving farms up to about twenty-seven years ago, having well-stocked pens and cattle-folds. On the four farms there were about forty milch cows, about eighty or ninety cattle of all sorts, and no less than three thousand sheep. Mr. Owen worked up the sleeve of Sir Richard Bulkeley's agent, and got all the land which had been connected with some of these homesteads for centuries attached to the hotel, with results that are quite painful to observe. Instead of the lively movements of living beings, the sound of the meal-time horn, the crack of the team driver's whip, the neighing, lowing, and bleating of horses, cattle, and sheep, respectively, together with the hundred other features of farm life, we have only a few stray sheep, a cow, or an ox here and there, and perchance a living being far from the reach of gesture or voice.

The hotel is now under the management of Mrs. Brookes, and the tourist will probably find every accommodation he

may need during his stay. He will, however, miss the ready information on the geography of Snowdonia, which the late landlord possessed in such abundance.

No name is so pleasantly connected with this place as that of Kingsley's. He was a man full of the sport and spirit of this wild and romantic district, and he threw himself so heartily into the enjoyment of all things that offered their sweets and pleasures to him, that he will always be looked upon as an ideal Snowdonian tourist. "But the delight of being there again, 2200 feet up," writes he of Lake Edno, "out of the sound of aught but the rush of wind and water and the whistle of sheep, and finding oneself *at home* there! Every rock, even the steps of slate and footholds of grass, just the same. Unchanged for ever."[1] Being such an excellent fisherman, every lake had a fascination for him, and being of such an athletic nature, he could not keep out of the clouds that so frequently enshroud these mountains.

Charles Kingsley.

No one knew better than his dear wife what Snowdon could do for him in the short space of a fortnight, and it is with such a pleasant recollection she quotes his invitation to Tom Hughes to join him in his tour. "At last the happy day was fixed, and the following invitation was sent:—

> "Come away with me, Tom,
> Term and talk is done;
> My poor lads are reaping,
> Busy every one.

[1] Kingsley's *Letters and Memoirs*, p. 186.

Curates mind the parish,
Sweepers mind the court,
We'll away to Snowdon
For our ten days' spŏrt.

. . . .

Leave to Robert Browning
Beggars, fleas, and vines ;
Leave to squeamish Ruskin
Popish Apennines,
Dirty stones of Venice,
And his Gas-lamps Seven ;
We've the stones of Snowdon
And the lamps of heaven."

This was probably the time when Kingsley, Tom Hughes, and Tom Taylor wrote a poem in the Pen y Gwryd visitors' book, which is printed in a small volume of extracts from that book of impulses, under the title of *Offerings at the Foot of Snowdon*. Each one wrote an alternate verse in the following vein :—

T. T.

I came to Pen y Gwryd with colours armed and pencils,
But found no use whatever for any such utensils ;
So in default of them I took to using knives and forks,
And made successful drawings—of Mrs. Owen's corks.

C. K.

I came to Pen y Gwryd in frantic hopes of slaying
Grilse, salmon, 3-lb. red-fleshed trout, and what else there's no saying ;
But bitter cold and lashing rain, and black nor'-eastern skies, sir,
Drove me from fish to botany, a sadder man and wiser.

T. H.

I came to Pen y Gwryd alarking with my betters,
A mad wag and a mad poet, both of them men of letters ;
Which two ungrateful parties, after all the care I've took
Of them, make me write verses in Henry Owen's book.

We have no space to quote much of the poem, which occupies five and a half pages of the little book ; but the following four lines must not be left out ; they are by Kingsley.

Hail ! O Snowdonia, e'er we go to storm thee,
Hail sinner ! who now reads, we could inform thee,
Pen y Gwryd kindness and good cheer will warm thee
Into true gratitude.

These friends, of closely kind sympathies, felt the spirit of abandon come upon them in these parts in such a way that they became, for the time being, almost as wild as their surroundings. To indulge in illustrious names, we may mention that it was from this hotel Huxley and Tyndal ascended Snowdon in 1860.

It is not definitely known what the meaning of Pen y Gwryd is. "Gwryd" means "a man's length," but what connection it has with this spot we do not know, unless it has something to do with giving a foe his length of mountain earth if he dared penetrate through this point. In the book from which we have quoted the above verses, it is suggested that it should be "Gwyryd," meaning "water-ford," that Pen (=top) denotes the end of a series of fords which had to be crossed from either direction—Capel Curig or Nant Gwynen. There is a word "Gwaered," meaning "downhill" or "a steep declivity," but it is so little used in North Wales that we only suggest with diffidence the probability of "Gwryd" being a corruption of that word, though it is not impossible that its very unfamiliarity in these parts accounts for the corruption.

There used to be a large stone on the land of Dyffryn Mymbyr, close by a stone enclosure on the left-hand side of the road in going to Capel Curig, before one reaches the point in the road opposite to Rhos Cyffylau—the first group of ancient buildings in the valley on the right. It was called Lech y Gwyr (The Watchmen's Stone), and is thought, by some, to have been the mark of one of the stations, or the outposts of the watchmen of Muriau'r Dre; but tradition says that this should be Llech Gwryd (Gwryd's Gravestone), because in the *Stanzas of the Soldiers of Britain* it is said that one Gwryd was buried in this valley. The stone was taken to "the Inn" at Capel Curig, before the oldest living inhabitant of the Vale of Gwryd was born.

Bwlch Goleugoed.—The spot known as Bwlch Goleugoed

(Pass of the Open Space in the Woods) is about three-quarters of a mile down the hill from Pen y Gwryd, as we return to Bedd Gelert. As already mentioned, the valleys of this parish were at one time so filled with trees, that it was almost impossible to traverse them. People used to cut down a large quantity of trees and then burn them on the open space thus made. The trees near the lakes were thrown into them, and this is "the reason," says Edward Llwyd, "why trees are found at the bottom of the lakes." The way leading into these valleys entered at Drws y Coed (The Door of the Woods), and it is said that only in one place could the sky be seen the whole way through, except at Bwlch Mwrchan, and that was Bwlch Goleugoed. There was no real gap even there, but the trees were thin enough to leave a clear view of the heavens.

We have now said all we mean to, for the present, about this beautiful valley, with its people of past and present, and its stories new and old. Is it now strange that Kingsley should sing of its charms in the following strains?

> There's a voice in Nant Gwynant, list, list to its call,
> 'Tis nature appealing to the hearts of us all.
> And shall we neglect it and pass on our way?
> Oh no! we will linger and list to her lay.
>
> . . . . .
>
> Above us, around us, wherever we look,
> Sweet nature turns to us a page in her book,
> In which, without searching, as we tread the green sod,
> We ever are meeting the finger of God.

CHAPTER XX

ABERGLASLYN—PASS AND BRIDGE

From the Village to the Pass.—Not more than two hundred yards from the Royal Goat Hotel, on the right-hand side of the road as we make for Aberglaslyn, was once a well, formerly called Ffynon Fair (St. Mary's Well), but afterwards Ffynon

y Person (The Parson's Well). The monks of St. Mary's Priory used it for their religious purposes—hence the first name. One of the parsons of Bedd Gelert had contracted a habit of leading his horse to water at this well, at a certain time every day regularly, and gave the well its second name. It had been handed over to cattle generations before it was ultimately filled up.

The little iron gate, at the end of the plantation, marks the place where the narrow, and even now well-preserved, bridle path of Cwm Ystradllyn emerges into the Bedd Gelert and Portmadoc road. A little farther on, we come to a gate which seems to open to the path of Gelert's grave; but some barbed wire—that diabolic invention—blocks up the way at the bottom of the field. At the far end of the second field, on our right, the traveller sees roofless ruins of old houses; these were used about twenty years ago by the miners of Bryn y Felin. By the side of these stands a small round structure, with a doorway looking southward. We know not to what use it was once put, but it may serve as an admirable landmark for identifying a piece of the Roman road which passes here. A cutting has been made in the rock immediately below it, which leads into the grove, and passes right over the mouth of the copper mine in the field on the Pass side of the woods.

After passing a sharp little hill in the road, we come to the old stamping-mills of Bryn y Felin mine; and looking from here towards the Pass, we get a view which is truly majestic. On our left is Craig y Llan, with its all but perpendicular ridges; and on our right towers the lofty hill of Bryn Du, curving round as if to obstruct our path, and run itself right into the side of Craig y Llan. One must almost enter the Pass before he is made aware of the fairly ample space between the two heights, when he finds, too, that the space is even more wonderful than the imagined obstruction. We have only seen one photograph of the Pass from the view-point of the stamping-mills, and it was excellent.

The Pass.—The hunch in the road on the top of the hill is a spot at which no traveller fails to pause, in order to take in the magnificence of this most remarkable Pass. Leaning on

the wall, one looks all around him, taking in with moving glance the general features of the marvellous scene, and then he stands back from the wall in blank amazement. The eye now travels over feature after feature of the scene in detail, and a kind of awe gradually fills the mind, until we are afraid to speak. Some one breaks the silence, but vocabulary soon pleads poverty, and we have to content ourselves with exclamations. Not so very long ago the road which led through this Pass was not more than a mere bridle path, skirting the deep ravine which the rapid little stream below has sawn during its ages of activity. Standing here then must have given one the feeling of being cut off from the world without. The high and rugged rock beyond the stream was all but touched by the juttings in front of which the path crept, and everything must have suggested an ideal place for a fugitive. By now, the tyranny of powder has compelled the jutting rocks to recede, and the wide road keeps one alive to the easy exit which awaits us at either end.

The vertical rock before us still retains its wildness, and wears unchanged its melancholy hue, as if its mission were that of an apostle of reverence; but nature strives hard to relieve the sombre sight, tips in season with tiny flowers the tufts of heather which lodge on the ledges, and urges on the scattered fir-trees in their struggle for life on the naked ridges. Then a sheep, as if striving to tame the wildness of the scene, perches itself aloft, and nibbles away at the ivy leaves which creep along the crags, heedless of the daring feats of its fellow, as the latter leaps from ledge to ledge above the great ravine, as fearlessly as if it were skipping on level ground. The Glaslyn, too, exerts itself in breathing life and spirit into the place, and sings aloud as it struggles with the fallen boulders which roughen its stony bed. The hill-slopes on our right are bedecked with trees of varied hues and colours, giving to the scene an element of tenderness and sweetness.

The Welsh name of the Pass is "Y Gymwynas," which means "a kindness." We have not been able to get a satisfactory explanation of this name, unless it expresses the consciousness of our forefathers that it was nature's boon to them,

Aberglaslyn in a Flood.

inasmuch as it enabled them to guard, with comparative ease, all their interests north of it. "The fastness of Aberglaslyn," says Bransby, "has repeatedly been the scene of protracted and bloody strife. History records that here a handful of gallant Welshmen have more than once disconcerted the hosts of the invader, and hurled his proud ensign to the earth."

Entering now into details, we must mention that we have failed to ascertain—if it mattered much—when the stone heap on Bryn Du, above the Pass, was put together. A very reliable informant tells us that it was piled up by a batch of soldiers, who stayed for a time at Bedd Gelert, and that the pile on Snowdon summit was made at the same time. Others wish to attribute it to the rejoicings in the district on the occasion of the marriage of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales.

The Chair of Rhys Goch.—Above the present road, a few yards nearer the village than Y Lefel Goch (the Red Level Shaft), once stood the famous chair of Rhys Goch Eryri. The chair contained a stone bench long enough to seat three together, two sides made of large stones fixed on ends, and a similar stone placed lengthwise for a back. On top of these was placed another stone, which formed a weatherproof roof overhead. It was reached by three stone steps from the old road, which was considerably higher than the present one. To this spot Rhys Goch is said to have continually resorted to compose his impassioned poetry, under the inspiration of the grandeur and seclusion of the place. There was nothing to break upon the awe-inspiring silence, except the varied strains of the Glaslyn, and the whistling of the winds in the rifts of the Pass. Sluggish indeed would be the muse which would decline to sing amid such environments!

> On distant rocks, a bard elate,
> With sacred inspiration sate;
> His wild eye beaming with celestial fire,
> And all the cloud-kept rocks around,
> Exulting in ecstatic sound,
> Echoed, and rivall'd his melodious lyre.

The letter C has been painted on a stone near the remnants

of an old bridge, leading to a disused copper mine, at the upper end of the Pass. This must be taken either as a joke or a piece of absurdity. It is meant for identifying the spot where Rhys Goch's chair stood.

The Mines.—Evans, in his *Topographical Dictionary*,[1] refers to the mines of the Pass, which were being worked at the beginning of this century. "Near the bridge, in the circumjacent lofty cliffs, are several vertical shafts, which have been sunk in quest of copper, and several adits or levels, driven for draining, etc. Though the ore obtained was a gray sulphate of copper, a rich quality yielding from five to ten per cent of metal, yet, till very lately, little advantage was derived from the concern. A company some time since obtained a lease of the mountain from the proprietor, Mr. Lloyd, and having placed an intelligent agent in a house near the mines, and erected a stamping-mill, with other machinery, the work is now conducted with spirit, and promises to become a profitable speculation."

This quotation refers, doubtless, to the Bryn y Felin mines, as well as to those in the Pass itself; as also does the following quotation taken from the *Cambrian Tourist.* "An intelligent man here (at the bridge) offered himself as our guide to the rich copper mines in the vicinity of Pont Aberglaslyn. This miner, having worked both here and at the Paris mountain, confidingly asserted that one pound of this ore was now esteemed equivalent to twice the quantity produced in Anglesey." Though Bryn y Felin has yielded some genuine metal, these mines are best associated in the minds of the inhabitants of the district with stories about befooled speculators, who fell victims to the waggishness of some of the beer-loving old miners. One example will suffice.

An experienced old miner and his son once happened to be out of work, and hearing that a number of gentlemen were eyeing about the district for a copper mine, went together to the Pass to see whether they might not hit upon a vein of ore somewhere there. After blasting and boring into the rock a little way, the son struck what seemed to him a pure vein. The copper which he thought he saw had been exposed by

[1] Published in 1812.

the removal of a thin slab, and, in his joy at the discovery, he was on the point of driving his pickaxe into the very heart of the vein. "Hold!" shouted the father; "don't touch it. I think we have worked enough to-day; let us dress and go home." They collected their tools, and away they went. After dressing himself in his clean after-work clothes, the old miner walked over to the Goat Hotel, and asked to see one of the gentlemen who were on the look-out for a copper mine. The interview was granted, with the result that they all set off at once to examine the new mine. The miner pointed out the ore to the speculators, but said nothing. After closely examining it, one of them said, "How much do you want for your bargain?" "Five hundred pounds," said the miner. His interrogator laughed at him, and offered him fifty. After a good deal of abating and holding out, the miner agreed to sell all for one hundred pounds, and everything was settled and squared up straight away. Miners were then engaged to open out the mine, but, alas! the first stroke of the pickaxe revealed the copper to be nothing more than a thin layer, which the water had washed into a seam between the stones, and the mine proved to be nothing better than a barren rock. That old miner is still spoken of as one with his head screwed on the right way.

These mines are referred to by another writer of the early part of the century. "Copper mines (at Pont Aberglaslyn) were originally worked many years ago; but the copper was so intermixed with other ores as to render it very difficult of separation with any advantage to the proprietors. About the year 1800, the high price of ore induced some adventurers to renew the works, from which great quantities of ore were obtained; but they were again discontinued, and remained in a neglected state until 1819, when they were re-opened. From that period many hundred tons were procured annually for some years, but no mines are now worked."[1]

The White Lady and Other Ghosts.—"The White Lady of the Pass" is an object of great attraction to all tourists. It is a white stone forming a sharp projection in the rock above the

[1] Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary*, third edit. vol. i. p. 80.

river, at a height of some three hundred feet. It is best seen from the point at which it first comes to view, in approaching the Pass from Bedd Gelert. We saw it for the first time on a bright moonlight night one September, and the optical delusion was perfect. Few people would ever imagine that this stone is the fossilised form of a real lady, and the reader may, in his impatience, use strong terms at our folly in mentioning it; but, alas! has she not haunted this Pass for years, and caused so many fatal frights that the thing cannot be stated in terms of discussion? We know not what strange story lies buried in the past, telling how she met her fearful fate. She nearly always appeared to a person about to meet with a serious accident or a sudden death. Her ghostly doings were at last arrested, and she was fossilised, and made the gazing stock of all men.

She was, however, not the last ghost that has been seen in the Pass. A man still living has told us the story of his own adventure while returning from the village late at night, on his way home to Portmadoc. He was walking along at a steady pace, thinking of the sweetheart whom he had newly left, when a huge mastiff, the size of a year-old calf, walked up beside him, from he knows not where. He trembled like a leaf, and paused to gaze at the creature, while a cold perspiration trickled down his face. While he was considering what to do, the mastiff vanished, and was not seen by him again. The late David Evans, Meillionen, twice met a ghost in this place; once it appeared to him as a figure of fire. He was both times on horseback, and, the last time, he and the horse took such fright that both suffered intensely in consequence. His life was, for a time, almost despaired of. The late Rev. William Ellis, Bedd Gelert, insisted until his dying day that he also had seen something in the Pass, of which he could give no account, though the recalling of it always gave him a cold shudder.

A Roman Embankment.—Near the bottom of the hill, between the wall and the river, is a cluster of fir-trees—to which we have referred in a previous chapter—thriving on a small embankment, which projects towards the river at an

angle of something like forty-five degrees. The embankment is a part of the old Roman road, and it cannot be much more than twenty years since one of the abutments of the Roman bridge was washed away. We have read the landmarks of the famous old road between Segontium and Heriri Mons, as given by more than one antiquarian, but all seem to have overlooked this interesting little piece. Just opposite this little grove lay the pool called Llyn yr Hen Bont (The Pool of the Old Bridge), which was made possible by the strong weir which existed half-way between the Roman bridge and the present bridge.

The Weirs.—The weirs of Aberglaslyn were at one time the joint property of some of the Welsh princes, and were for generations rented from them by the family of Gesail Gyfarch. They were vested in the British Crown during the reign of Henry IV., and remained a Crown property until the time of Henry VIII., when they passed, along with the surrounding property, into the hands of private individuals, who rented them to fishermen at a small sum per annum. John Wynn's weir, as one was called, was higher up the river, and both were rented by the same party. After the great embankment at Portmadoc was made, by the late Mr. Madocks, and the course of the tide was checked, the weirs lost their value, and were allowed to fall into ruins.

We may here gain something by quoting Bingley. "A few yards above the bridge, the river flows down a range of rocks, eight or ten feet from the surface of the lower water. This cataract is chiefly noted as a salmon leap. Salmon come up the freshwater streams to deposit their spawn on the sandy shallows, and when impeded in their progress by rocks or dams across the water, they have the power of springing to an amazing height above the surface, in order to pass over them. This place, being only a very few miles from the sea, is frequented by great numbers. In the course of an hour I have seen twenty or thirty of them attempt to overcome this barrier; but on account of a piece of netting, which the renters of the fishery place there for the purpose of preventing them, they do not often succeed. Their extraordinary power of

leaping out of the water is owing to a sudden jerk which the fish give to their body, from a bent into a straight position. At this place, when the fish are fatigued from their vain attempts to gain the upper stream, they retire to the still waters below, where they are either taken in nets, or are killed with harpoons. In the latter mode the men are always so sure of their aim, that I have seen five or six fine fish killed by one person in the course of an hour. The general weight of the salmon caught near Pont Aberglaslyn in August and September is from one to eighteen pounds. About the end of October they become much larger."

The same writer adds that the annual rent of the weirs was £12, and that the fish, when sold on the spot, were generally thought worth three or four pence per pound. Salmon was at one time reckoned among game by the Welsh, and laws were made for their preservation. It also may be true that these fish were so abundant in the middle of the eighteenth century, that servants had to stipulate that they would not be obliged to eat salmon more than three times a week, as Bransby says; but we heard that story related of some part of Scotland. Be that as it may, salmon is a choice dish; nevertheless, those servants were magnanimous labourers.

Visitors who passed this way in the summer time expected to enjoy the same feats of these aquatic gymnasts as autumn travellers had the pleasure of witnessing by the hours, and turned their disappointment against the veracity of writers of guide-books; whereas they ought to have placed it at the door of their deficient knowledge of the habits and seasons of the piscine brood.

The Bridge.—From no point of view is the Pass seen to such an advantage as from this well-known bridge of Aberglaslyn. It commands a view of nearly the whole of the stupendous rift, but leaves enough out of sight to give one the impression that all this grandeur revealed is only a part of a greater whole, which no single view can command.

It was our good fortune, in the month of September 1897, to witness a very memorable sight from this bridge. It was a morning after a heavy, steady downpour of rain, which had

been falling on yonder mountains for about thirty-six hours. The thousand mountain rills had swelled the Glaslyn into a raging torrent, and, as it rushed through the Pass with its loud, gurgling noise, it seemed to boil like a cauldron, while the flood scarcely revealed a suspicion of the usual yellowy colour—it was a beautiful shade of cream. The sun up till then had been veiled behind the clouds, but now its rays began to pene-

With Mr. O. M. Edwards's Permission.)

Old Aberglaslyn Bridge.

trate through the mist, and its softened gleam fell upon the autumnal tint of the leaves, and upon the cream-coloured flood below, and produced an effect which made it easy for a man to think with kindly sympathy of every Pantheist.

This bridge is mentioned by a writer in 1596 as one of the five bridges of Carnarvonshire. It has an arch of some thirty feet, and is formed of two distinct parts. The lower part is not much over ninety years old, but the upper part probably dates from the fifteenth century, being only wide enough for pedestrians and men on horseback. It was then a little lower than it is at present, having a steep ascent on its Merioneth-

shire side, and being connected with the old road which ran along the same bed as the Roman road for a short distance.

Many have expected to find something very wonderful in this bridge, and feel, when they come to it, as if they had been taken in. It was so with Bingley. "In the bridge itself my expectations were, I must confess, considerably disappointed. I had somewhere read of an arch thrown across a narrow stream, one end resting on a perpendicular rock in Carnarvonshire, and the other on another in Merionethshire. Perhaps also in some measure confounding it with what I had heard of Devil's Bridge, near Hafod, in Cardiganshire, I had formed an idea that I should see an arch thrown across a deep, narrow valley, and hanging as it were in mid-air; but how disappointing to find it a bridge very little out of the usual form! The grandeur of the surrounding scenery rendered it, indeed, an insignificant object; but even this does not prevent it from forming a beautiful addition to the mountain view."[1] The author of *Letters from Snowdon* was responsible for Bingley's expectation, for he confounded this bridge with that in Cardiganshire.

Though there is nothing out of the common in the bridge itself, it leaves a distinct impression of its own on the mind, as one recalls the scenery of the Pass. Do not the following words of Bingley himself reveal this?

"During the time I was at Bedd Gelert I found myself one evening in want of employment, and as the moon shone beautifully bright, I was tempted to wander alone as far as the bridge. . There never was a more charming evening. The scene was not clad in its late grand colours, but was now more delicately shaded, and arrayed in softer charms. The darkening shadows of the rocks cast a gloom around, and the faint rays, in some places faintly reflected, gave to the straining eye a very imperfect glimpse of the surfaces it looked upon, whilst in others the moon shot her silver light through the hollows, and brightly illumined the opposite rocks. The silence of the evening was only interrupted by the murmuring of the brook, and now and then by the shrill scream of the night-owl,

[1] P. 252.

flitting by me in search of food. . . . The bridge was deserted, and I hung over its rude battlements, listening to the hoarse fall of the water down the weir, and watching, as the moon ascended higher, the decreasing shadows of the mountains. The solitude gave rise to reflection, and I indulged almost too long, for when I arrived at the inn I found I had been absent nearly two hours."[1]

It would be interesting to know how much the place has changed since the Princes of Meirion received the sign of the cross from the hand of Archbishop Baldwin, when on his preaching tour in Wales on behalf of the Crusade. That was the time when Giraldus, the Welshman, passed through, and we can imagine his scanning the Pass, cowl in hand, almost overcome with admiration, yet uttering not a word. It is quite probable that the following words, from his *Itinerary*, refer to this spot: —"This territory of Conan, and particularly Merionyth, is the rudest and roughest district of all Wales; the ridges of its mountains are very high and narrow, terminating in sharp peaks, and so irregularly jumbled together that if the shepherds conversing or disputing with each other from their summits should agree to meet, they could scarcely effect their purpose in the course of the whole day."[2]

Folk-Lore and the Bridge.—Local folk-lore attributes the construction of the bridge to the skill and ingenuity of the devil. A great flood, it seems, some very long time ago, swept away the bridge which had spanned this chasm, and as the parishioners could not themselves erect a new bridge, they appealed to an old Welsh magician—Robin Ddu by name—to get one erected for them. Robin referred the matter to Old Nick, who agreed to make a new bridge over Llyn Du (The Black Pool), as the pool beneath the bridge was called, on condition that he should have the first creature that crossed it. His majesty set to work without delay, and one day, while Robin was drinking in the old public-house of Aberglaslyn village, the devil informed him that the bridge was completed, and ready for traffic. "All right," said Robin, "I will come to see the work, and to make sure that thy labours are not un-

[1] P. 255. [2] The *Itinerary Through Wales* (Bohn), p. 438.

rewarded." In the public-house was a little dog, which Robin induced to follow him by throwing it bits of a loaf, which he carried under his arm. When they reached the bridge, the devil

Aberglaslyn Bridge (as it is now).

pointed to his structure with a boastful air, exclaiming, "There's a bridge for thee." "Yes, yes," said Robin sceptically, "but is it strong? Will it hold the weight of this loaf?" "Throw it on and see," replied the devil. So Robin rolled

the loaf over the bridge, and the dog instantly darted after it. "H'm! it will do," said the wily old magician, "and the first creature to cross it is that dog, to which thou art welcome." Then with a laugh which pealed against the rocks, Robin returned to his boon companions to drink the health of all concerned—except the devil.

A similar story is connected with the much more remarkable bridge in Cardiganshire. It little matters which has the prior claim to the service of Satan, but everything connected with Pont ar Fynach breathes fear into the stoutest hearts. The Devil's Punch-Bowl and the tremendous falls draw from every observer the exclamation, "Isn't this awful?" It is not without reason that the old people called it "The Devil's Bridge." As it is short, we may quote the story for the sake of comparison :—

"An old woman in search of her strayed cow saw her on the opposite side of the cleft rock, and while lamenting that she could not come at her, the devil appeared, consoled her case, and told her that he would accommodate her with a bridge over the chasm, if she would suffer him to take the *first* who went over it. As she *must* be ruined in one case, and could *but* be ruined in the other, she complied. A bridge instantly arose. She debated a moment: her cow was dear, herself dearer, but the contract could not be broken. She pulled a piece of bread out of her pocket and threw it on the other side. Her dog, ignorant of the contract, darted over the bridge to seize it. He now became the forfeited prize; but as Satan kept no dogs but what had three heads, hers was of no use. He looked askew at being bit by an old woman—and who was more able to bite him?—hung his tail, and walked off. He behaved, however, with great honour, for he kept his word, which is more than we often do."[1]

Both versions bear the stamp of their locality; the former belongs to a seaport village, where the magician would have high times among his credulous sailor-chums; the latter to an isolated mountain district, where an acre and a cow would be the appurtenances of more than one widow's home.

[1] *On and Off the Cambrian* (quoted after Hutton).

Two Traditions.—There are two things which tradition hands down as interesting anecdotes connected with the bridge. One is that the only accident which has happened on this bridge resulted in neither loss nor harm. At one time the bridge had no adequate protection on its lower side, and when one Edward Hughes, Hafod y Llyn, was carrying stones for the erection of the walls, his cart and two horses tumbled over the side into the river. To his great surprise, and greater delight, the horses swam with their cart, and emerged scatheless on the fields lower down.

The other anecdote is that a treaty of commerce between Britain and France was signed on this bridge. The British Minister—conjectured to be Lord Thurlow—happened to be taking a holiday in North Wales, and, while staying at Bedd Gelert, the French Minister came after him, and found his lordship leaning over the wall of Pont Aberglaslyn, amusing himself by watching the salmon leaping over the weir. The terms were discussed, and the treaty signed there and then.

How many here have wondering stood
To watch the flashing, raging flood,
Or share the mirth of fish at play,
In the leisure of a summer's day.

Around it scarpèd rocks upheave,
Whose frowning brows the tempests grieve,
While all day long the waterfall
Re-echoes to its brethren's call.

Two counties thus have here clasped hands,
And firmly the memorial stands,
To tell abroad our fathers' skill—
Joining eternal hill to hill.

IOAN MODOG, translated by ELVET.

CHAPTER XXI

ABERGLASLYN AND OERDDWR

Llyn Glas and the Tide.—The house by Aberglaslyn bridge was originally a toll-gate house, and, like all such houses, was tiny and low-roofed. Before the embankment at Portmadoc was built this was an important gate, and the little house must have witnessed much traffic. Some seventeen or eighteen years ago it was rebuilt into its present form. The tide used to come within a short distance of the bridge, so that the track of Traeth Mawr could not be crossed, with cattle or on horseback, except when the tide was out. People on foot crossed the ferry from Borth y Gest. To help men to remember the times of the tide, and thus be enabled to choose their way, even when far out of the sight of the sea, englynion were composed and committed to memory. We are not sure that we have exactly understood the following example :—

Yn nydd lloer newydd, ar naw—o'r gloch
Y gwlych y llanw eithiaw ;
Y llawn ddydd y llanw a ddaw
I'r un nôd a'r newidiaw.

But we venture to give it the following rendering :—

Whene'er a new moon comes, at nine
The tide doth mark its highest line ;
When days are long, the tide swells high,
Just when the change of moon is nigh.

The following four lines, translated by Elvet, refer to the force of the tide, and its rapid and slow movements :—

If east or west the moon shall lie,
The rising flood swells loud and high ;
But when it lies or south or north,
More gently doth the tide flow forth.

We have already mentioned that the river Glaslyn is so

called from a Llyn Glas, because that was once the last pool through which it flowed before reaching the sea. We now have the pleasure of pointing out the green pool, which has lent its name to this charming river. Stand on the sharp turning of the road, about sixty yards from the bridge house, and look straight into the river; that is the green pool, half filled in the middle with pebbles washed by the floods. At its lower end a little brook enters into it from the Nanmor side, and forms a curve which drives the river due south-west. This pool is best seen from the Nanmor side, or even better from the old Roman road above that.

Aberglaslyn Village.—We now come to a small house on the left-hand side, at the road end of which stands a roofless ruin. This is the only house which remains of the once flourishing village of Aberglaslyn or Aber, as it was commonly called. From earliest times, until the tide rolled here no more, ships sailed up to this village with all kinds of goods and wares, and fishing-boats dotted the neighbouring sands. Here the people of Bedd Gelert parish did all their import and export trade. Portmadoc has only come into existence during this century, so that Borth y Gest and Aberglaslyn were *the* ports of Traeth Mawr; and it was at these places the little coasters were built. The quay wall is still visible on the Nanmor side of the river, and it is not so very long ago since an old stone pillar stood on the bank on the same side, to which ships were moored. It was pulled up from sheer love of mischief, and thrown into the river, where it still lies. Shipping trade with this port was carried on unbroken until about 1780, when things began to abate. It is said that the last ship which sailed from Traeth Mawr was *Hannah Glaslyn.*

The importance of this port in olden times may be imagined from the number of fortifications which guarded it, the ruins of many of which remain to the present day. About 150 years ago, Aberglaslyn village contained some twelve to fifteen houses, one of which was a good-sized public-house, called Tafarn Telyn (The Harp), bearing the sign of a Welsh harp. This was the hotel of the parish in its time, and the only licensed house which has ever been known in the vicinity of

Nanmor. We can easily imagine the jollity and unrefined fun which accompanied the drinking of the place. Where could one get such harmonious contrasts as the free-hearted sailors, and the bards and singers of Nanmor?

The landlord of this public-house from about 1760-80 was Thomas Prichard, a man who filled the posts of bailiff over the weirs and the river, clerk of St. Mary's, Bedd Gelert, and constable of the parish. He was succeeded by his son, Evan

The Store-house. (*Aberglaslyn Village.*)

Llyn Glas. Pen y Groes.

Thomas. The last man, as far as we have been able to ascertain, who kept this house was one Hugh Jones, a tailor. There was an old saying that the lowest hearth in North Wales was that of Tafarn Telyn, and the highest that of Hafotty Cwm Dyli, both of which were in this parish.

By a hundred years to this time, the houses were reduced to seven habitable cots, some of which bore the names of the occupant, such as Ty Gwen Robert, Ty Neli Robert, Ty William Robert: others were named as if they were different

parts of the same house. Wm. Robert's house, for instance, was also called "Y Gegin" (The Kitchen), the above-mentioned Hugh Jones's house was called "Y Parlwr" (The Parlour), and the old store-house was made habitable, and called "Y Storws." The two remaining houses took their names from their positions —"Ty Draw" (Yonder House), and "Ty Pellaf" (The Farthest House).

When people spoke of the Aberites, they meant something more than the people who, by the chances of Providence, lived in the village of Aberglaslyn—they were all relatives. They lived in a freehold plot of God's earth; not one of them had ever known what it meant to pay rent for the cots of their village. In their innocence, they spoke of their estate as being in Chancery. But spying eagles found the carrion, and the question was how could they pounce upon it without falling into the hands of the law. A certain Captain Wardle tried the dodge of building a weir opposite the property. The stout-hearted, but ill-fated, John Thomas, Ty Draw, and another man, on the advice of the late Mr. Rumsey Williams, pulled it to pieces, and no attempt was made to restore it.

One day, however, two men appeared on the grounds armed with a big saw and a couple of hatchets, and, without saying a word to any one, felled two large ash-trees—one by the road-side and the other by the river-side—lopped off the branches, and walked away. The women, from time to time, gathered the branches and burned them as firewood, but no one touched the trunks. Nothing more was done for some time; but one day three men and a bailiff drove up to the village and told the occupants of the "Gegin" and "Parlwr" that they must quit at once, that their houses were to be unroofed. The helpless women began to weep and pleaded for some explanation. The only explanation they got was to see their furniture hurled out through the door. One poor fellow, Cadwaladr Roberts, was lying ill in bed; he was dragged down the ladder which connected the ground floor and his tiny bedroom, and left in the hands of the houseless neighbours, until he found shelter in the Union of Penrhyn Deudraeth.

When the men had hurled the slates in all directions, and

the houses were completely dismantled, they turned the occupants of "Y Storws" into the open air, turned the key in the door, and walked away. That house had not long before been set in good repair by the occupiers, so the villains thought it was a pity to unroof it. It is that cot which we now find occupied. The walls of the dismantled houses are still standing, crying "shame" upon the barbarous, infamous deed so brazenly, shamelessly done. An old cow-house, which had once been the store-house of bracken charcoal for exportation, was made the receptacle for the furniture, and sympathetic friends gave temporary shelter to the homeless. After this piece of daylight robbery, the property passed into the hands of David Williams, Esq., Deudraeth Castle, for some time M.P. for Merionethshire.

Aberglaslyn Hall and Dinas Ddu.—That beautiful house on an elevation, on the right-hand side of the road, is Aberglaslyn Hall. The stables and coach-house have replaced an old stamping-mill, which belonged to the Aber copper works. The present Hall is built on a site higher up than the old mansion, which was very quaint, and of a very early style of architecture. It was occupied from time to time by Mr. Owen, Major Gore, Mr. Le Foe, and Mr. Cowper,—we do not guarantee the authenticity of these names,—men who managed the Aber mine.

The next house we come to is the water bailiff's, and we point it out as a landmark. Some thirty yards lower down the road, is said to be a very wonderful oak, called the "golden oak." We have not seen it, but Mr. Humphrey Jones, Colwyn, tells us that its golden roots can be distinctly seen in the river, when the water is low.

The farm which we next come to is Dinas Ddu (The Black Fort). It is quite probable that an old Welsh fort was once perched on the high dark peak close by, but no traces remain. The old quarry close by never prospered, if, indeed, it was ever meant to. A late tenant of Dinas Ddu used to tell men who examined the place with a view to purchasing it, not to be such fools as to spend their money on a place which could not possibly yield anything. For his honesty he got a solicitor's letter from London, telling him that if he did not

"keep his mouth shut" it would "have to be shut" for him. The old man treasured that letter, and made it the joke of his life, showing it to everybody.

Oerddwr.—A pathway leads up through the woods behind Dinas Ddu to Oerddwr Isaf and Oerddwr Uchaf. It is not easy to find it, and permission should be asked before using it. We were led over it by Mr. Evans (junior), Dinas Ddu, who gave us his company while we explored the ground between there and Bryn Bannog. After emerging from the woods, Oerddwr Isaf stood before us. The old house is now an out-house close by. From here Hendre was pointed out to us—an old ruin south of where we stood.

Owen Prichard, a tenant of Hendre, was for years an invalid, confined to his bed. Every spring he became peevishly impatient to hear the cuckoo, and as that bird was always late arriving in these parts, his wife would go outside and imitate the cuckoo's song. By this auricular delusion she contrived to cheer the old man's heart; but the neighbours found her out, and the nickname of "cuckoo" stuck to the old woman for the rest of her life. When the various houses now in ruins were occupied, Hendre was the meeting-place of a very flourishing Sabbath School.

On our way towards Oerddwr Uchaf, which is higher up, in a north-western direction, than Oerddwr Isaf, we came across an old fortification, called Pen y Gaer, now used as a sheep-fold. It must have been an exceedingly strong old fort, but, like most Welsh forts, it had no special design. It simply follows the outline of the rock on which it is built. The walls were built without mortar, and an extensive rampart of stone and turf was constructed below, to strengthen the inner defence. We saw traces of recent excavations, and on inquiring, found that Mr. J. A. Williams, then of Aberglaslyn Hall, had been there in search of objects of interest. We did not learn that he had found anything.

One of the out-houses of Oerddwr Uchaf was once inhabited, and called Ty Ceryg. An old woman named Ann Jones was buried from there in the year 1826, at the age of one hundred and six years.

When we had seen these objects of interest around Oerddwr, and had examined Muriau Gleision, where Owen Glyndwr is said to have drilled his raw recruits into good soldiers, Mr. Evans and Mr. Hughes—the tenant of Oerddwr Uchaf—led us to Bwlch Cwm Ystradllyn. There we saw three ruins of ancient structures, two of which are circular, and were, as we conjectured, once used as watch-towers for guarding the bridle path over this Pass into Cwm Ystradllyn, through

Pen y Gaer. Oerddwr Uchaf.

which the enemy might have penetrated into the vales of Snowdon, without going through the Pass of Aberglaslyn. Mr. Hughes told us that the first thing he remembers of them is their being used for quoiting purposes. In the centres of the circles are two holes, into which the parties tried to throw the quoits.

From the Pass of Cwm Ystradllyn, we walked to the artificial lakes made by Mr. Ernest Greaves, the Lord-Lieutenant of Carnarvonshire. Then we made for the old ruins of the small farm of Llys y Cripil (the Cripple's Court),

and on our way found the marks of an enclosure, not at all unlike the one of Mur Murianau, on the Rhyd-ddu path to Snowdon. Lower down, north-east of this, we saw Mr. Greaves's young plantation of fir-trees, the ground of which is teeming with Cytiau'r Gwyddelod. The enclosure must have been used for religious purposes by those who occupied the Cytiau.

After examining two more ruins of old houses, one of which was Llys y Cripil, dear to our guide as the birthplace of his mother, we left Gardd Offt, Pant Sian, and Gardd Wil, on the left-hand side of our path, and emerged into the road just at the place where the remarkable snake, exhibited at the Zoo as coming from "Nanmor Bedd Gelert," was caught some sixty years ago.

CHAPTER XXII

NANMOR

Pen y Groes and the Marshes.—Let us now cross Aberglaslyn bridge, and ascend the little steps, made by human feet, to the piece of Roman road above us. Take note of everything that you see from your elevation, and watch the thrill of delight that possesses you. Autumn is the time for a view from here, when the various tints of the foliage reveal the endless resources of nature in colour-painting, and when the leaves have been thinned sufficiently to disclose the isolated dwellings, veiled from view during the summer.

The ancient little building close by is Pen y Groes—so called from the fact that the old road branched into two at this point. It provides a home for two families, the one nearest Nanmor being occupied by Glaslyn, the most poetic and literary man within the parish. Glaslyn is only the *nom de plume* of Mr. Richard Owen, but he is as little known by his proper name as George Eliot was as Miss Mary Evans. Though now a man up in years, and somewhat broken in

health, yet every month brings proof of his quiet efforts, as our magazines appear with an article or a poem from his facile pen. He is fairly well read in English literature, and possesses an excellent store of interesting knowledge about his country and countrymen. His wife is the daughter of the late John Jones, parish clerk of Bedd Gelert, and Kingsley's favourite fisherman. Both have many fresh and vivid recollections of the by-gones of Bedd Gelert, of which we have made free use.

R. O. Glaslyn and his Home.

A few yards below Pen y Groes, one may see traces of an old road, twisting round so as to cross the present road leading to Penrhyn Deudraeth. It skirted Bryn Gelli'r Ynn—the wooded hillock in front of us—on the side nearest the river; and at the farthest end of the hillock crossed a little bridge, which some think to be of Roman origin. By stooping to peep under the arch, it is easy to see that the little bridge did service for generations as a narrow bridge of a bridle path; and its width was, doubtless, doubled to cope with the in-

creased business of the quay. It spans what was once the bed of Cwmcaeth rivulet, which a Mr. Wynne of Wern turned into its present course, on the other side of the hill, before making an embankment to reclaim the marsh land, by keeping back the tides. We may mention, in parenthesis, that this embankment was made about the middle of the eighteenth century, when men worked for fourpence a day, on their own food.

A causeway once ran along the marshes as far as the bend of the river, opposite Dinas Ddu ; then a winding path mounted the bend in Bryn y Gwynt, where it turned to the right. This path must have branched off in two directions near the lake of Hafod y Llyn, the one making for Hafod Garegog—still well preserved—and the other passing Hafod y Llyn and Ferlas. The former is called Llwybr Rhys Goch (The Path of Rhys Goch), because tradition credits Rhys with its construction. It is excellently constructed, resembling even in details the recognised Roman roads. In order to guide the foot over the swamps, should it be dark, stones were set on edges on each side. The path led on by Ynysfor and Careg Hylldrem, turning off at the latter place to the left, as the tide washed right up to the bridge.

Many take this as a genuine Roman road, made to join Aberglaslyn and a road in Lower Merioneth, somewhere near Penrhyn Deudraeth. But it is difficult to conceive of the Romans making a road, part of which would be washed twice a day by the tide. It is possible, however, to conceive of the tides having washed up sufficient sand by the time of Rhys Goch, or his immediate ancestors, so as to encourage the task.

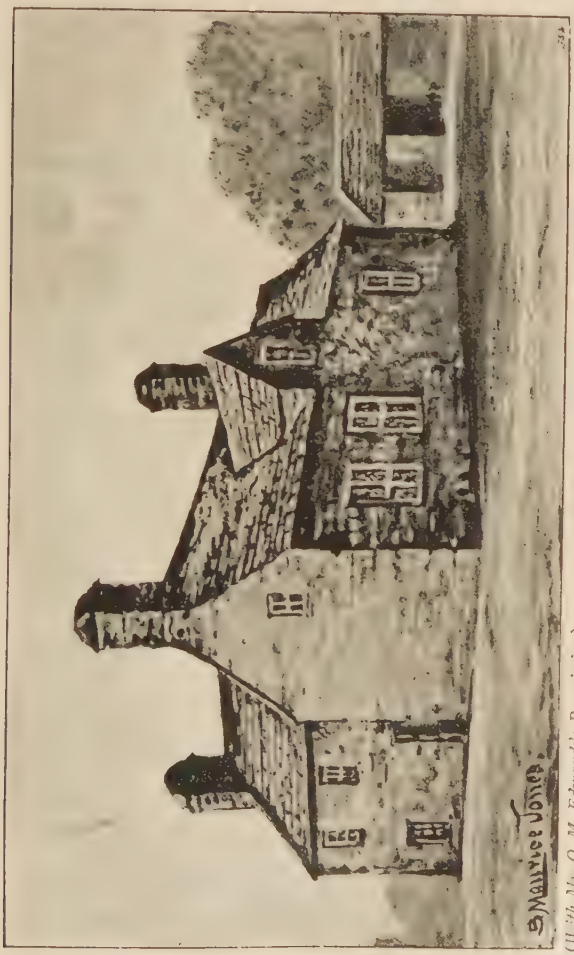
Hafod y Llyn.—Hafod y Llyn Uchaf is a quaint old farmhouse, on the eastern side of Bryn y Gwynt—the hill which runs parallel with the Portmadoc road, on the other side of the river. The old ruin of the original homestead is on the hill above the present house ; it was last occupied by the grandfather of the tenant who has just passed away. In summer these surroundings are truly charming, and rugged Bryn y Gwynt, with its innumerable projections, is a capital old hill

for a ramble. It was in the side of this hill Ogo'r Smugglers (The Smuggler's Cave) used to be. Time and weather had covered up the mouth of this old receptacle of smuggled goods, until a fox, a few years ago, being pressed in the chase, fled into it for refuge. When the stones which had fallen on its mouth were removed, the cave fell in. The man who had ventured after Reynard escaped with his prize none too soon. These crags were the common haunt of smugglers at one time, and one can spend a pleasant afternoon hunting for likely places of storage. Hafod y Llyn Isaf is at the lower end of Bryn y Gwynt, and a path from there to Ferlas is kept open by a beam over Nanmor River, where the ruins of an old stone bridge may be seen, stretched across the river-bed.

Hafod Garegog and Rhys Goch.—Hafod Garegog stands on the banks of the Nanmor River, a few hundred yards from the Penrhyn Deudraeth road. This is widely known as the home of Rhys Goch Eryri. Nothing is left of the old mansion proper; a late tenant pulled the ruins to pieces to get stones for new pig-styes! It stood in the court between the present house and the river, facing eastward. The Hafod Garegog of to-day formed the kitchen and servants' rooms as part of the old mansion. The old-fashioned fireplace, the curious stone staircase, the windows, and the thick, well-made walls speak of the days of Rhys Goch. Several alterations have been made to bring the building to its present condition, but far be the day when these quaint old features shall be wiped away. Old steps leading from the court to the garden below the house may also be seen, but in a very dilapidated state. We have heard that the old mansion was abandoned about the beginning of the last decade of the eighteenth century, in order to adapt affairs to the needs of simple farmers.

Rhys Goch's causeway is immediately below the house; and a mill, in which all the corn-grinding of the tenants was done, from the middle of the seventeenth century until about fifty years ago, stands by the river-side, between the house and the road. The hill above the farmyard is one of special interest. On the left-hand side as we mount it, we have the old kennel, which Morris Williams built for his noisy pack of

foxhounds, and which pious old Nancy Robinson inhabited



Hafod Garegog.

(With Mr. O. M. Edwards's Permission.)

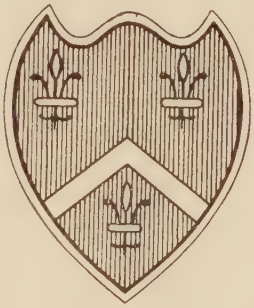
about a century ago. On the top we come to a structure which people insist on calling Cadair Rhys Goch—not to be

confounded with the one in Aberglaslyn Pass—where he is said to have composed most of his Cywyddau and Englynion. To us it seems but an old watch-tower, where Rhys's dependents in turn kept a constant lookout. It was probably from here Rhys's man saw Glyndwr's pursuers approaching, and hastened the escape of Owen and his master. It had places wherein the watchman could shelter in winds and storms, from whatever direction they may have come. We were led to expect stones with inscriptions on them, but every such relic has escaped our notice. The fact that the hill is called Bryn y Tŵr (Hill of the Watch-Tower) seems to go against the notion that Rhys used it for his poetic reveries.

It is not definitely known whether Rhys was married or not; but it is generally agreed that if he was, it must have been late in life. His heiress was named Margaret, who bequeathed the estate to her son, Morris Gethin; and he left it to his son Lewis, who gave it to his son Hugh, and Hugh to his son William. This William married Gwen, daughter of Lewis Anwyl, Park, Llanfrothen, and these were the parents of Morris, the aforesaid master of the foxhounds. This Morris was called Morris ab William, just as his father was called William ab Hugh, and his grandfather Hugh ab Lewis; but this method of naming became so very trying to the English judges of our courts, that Morris ab William had to call himself Morris Williams. He was twice Sheriff of Merioneth, first in 1648-49, and secondly in 1664-65; and through his popularity with his tenants, his estate nearly doubled its value during his day. As Borrow's "Mr. Blicklin" was one of his descendants, it is little wonder that his tenant should have spoken so well of him. The last heiress of Rhys Goch, who lived at Hafod Garegog, was Jane Wynn, who married the Rev. Zaccheus Hughes, Trefan. She carried with her to Trefan an old bedstead of Rhys's, which was the last relic of his household.

Tradition and biographies tell us that Rhys Goch flourished during the latter half of the fourteenth century, and the first two decades of the fifteenth. The majority of the distinguished men of his day have been conjectured into centenarians, so that we

are not surprised that Rhys is said to have lived to a great age. Hospitality was never denied to strangers who passed his house, and his Eisteddfodau attracted bards from all parts of Wales to Hafod Garegog. His genius, too, was acknowledged even by his ablest contemporaries, and his skill in the use of the confined metres is still a matter of admiration. Wit, humour, vivacity, and passion are unfailing elements in his poetry. "An Eisteddfod was held at Dôl Goch, in Emlyn, under the patronage of Llewelyn, the son of Gwilym, which was attended by John of Kent (Kentchurch), and Rhys Goch of Snowdon, in Gwynedd, between whom contention arose. John of Kent was pronounced superior in sacred, and Rhys Goch in encomiastic poetry. However, superiority and the chair were adjudged to sacred poetry." Over thirty pieces of his are supposed to be extant, and even Borrow had heard of his "Satiric Ode to a Fox." "My mind was full of enthusiastic fancies, all connected with this Rhys Goch, and as I went along slowly I repeated stanzas of furious war songs of his, exciting his countrymen to exterminate the English, and likewise snatches of an abusive ode composed by him against a fox who had run away with his favourite peacock, a piece so abounding with hard words, that it was termed the drunkard's choke-pear, as no drunkard was ever able to recite it."[1]



Rhys Goch's Crest.

Nanmor Village.—By the bridge at the end of the Hafod Garegog farm road we see Talyrni, an old house built in 1791. On the adjoining field is old Talyrni, built about 1662, and well known in Calvinistic Methodist circles as a place of sacred memories. We will have occasion to refer to it again. At present we must return to Pen y Groes, where the Roman road through Croesor to Tomen y Mur (Heriri Mons) branches off behind the house, pass Cwm Bychan, Beudy Newydd, and Bwlch Gwernog, whence it can be easily traced for many miles.

[1] *Wild Wales*, p. 150.

As soon as we turn from the main road and enter the little road leading to Nanmor, we come to Gelli'r Ynn, where the weaver's shuttle rattled for years under the watchful eye of ambitious woollen factors. Most young weavers were anxious to have some experience with Owen Prichard, who had made a good name for himself and his factory. A severe illness had left him bald-headed, and John Jones, Glan Gwynant, once made a playful use of that misfortune to induce him to a little liberality towards the church funds. While holding the collection plate before him, he told him, quite audibly, not to withhold a single mite which he could afford, or else "not a single hair will there grow again on that bald head of thine."

The ruins of an old Roman station lie within the plantation opposite Gelli'r Ynn, which was subsidiary to the one to be mentioned presently. We now pass a row of houses called Bryntirion, and then come to the school, which is in the efficient hands of Mr. and Mrs. Harrison. The chapel before us belongs to the Calvinistic Methodists, and was built in the year 1868, along with two dwelling-houses, at a cost of £420. The first chapel was erected in 1829, on a lease of twenty-one years, and the life of Mr. Wilson Jones, Dolfriog, who then owned the property. The chapel and appurtenances cost about £250, and the lease expired after thirty-eight years. These little country chapels are wonderfully successful in paying off their debts, without wasting much money on interest for loans, and the debts of Peniel have been met without more than a trifle in interest.

Mr. John Jones, one of the deacons, lives in the Chapel House. He is a man of humour, and possessed of a splendid gift for quaint religious anecdotes. No one can approach him in knowledge of the religious life and movements of this picturesque vale, during the last hundred years, and his lengthy MSS. have been gladly placed at our service. Nanmor is ever alive to the advantages of literary and musical competitive meetings, which provide such moral and mental stimulus, as well as good pastime, for the youth of the district. Mr. Jones's best essay won in one of these meetings.

The Roman Fort of Beudy Newydd.—By keeping along the

cart track which leads to Cwmcaeth farm, until we find a path on our right, and then walking on over a couple of fields, we come to an old Roman fort, on a field immediately below Beudy Newydd. It is very unfortunate that Mr. Priestley should have allowed his tenant to tear up part of this interesting old relic, for the advantage can only mean a few square yards extra for ploughing purposes. It is not so long since the late Mr. E. Breese bought the land, mainly in order to preserve the ruins. We feel sure that what remains will not

The Roman Fort and Beudy Newydd.

be disturbed, and that whatever may be accidentally removed will be carefully replaced. The following is a description of it prior to 1878, when an article of twelve pages appeared on it in the *Archæologia Cambrensis*.

"On a farm called Beudy Newydd, the property of Mr. E. Breese, is an oblong work. It is situated in the hamlet of Nant y Môr, two miles from Bedd Gelert. . . . It is about 130 feet by 85 feet, and surrounded with stone walls of what was once substantial dry masonry, as one may infer from the walls at A and B of the entrance, the lower parts of which

retain their original facings. The opposite end of the work has been completely removed, as far as the wall is concerned, but a slight elevation of the ground clearly indicates the line of bank reaching the rectangular chamber, which is so filled up with stones collected from the adjoining land that it is impossible, without removing them, to ascertain the use and nature of the work. The opposite corner has no such appendage, or any vestige of one, but there probably was one originally. At the opposite end of the camp, where the original entrance was, and still remains, will be noticed considerable enlargements of masonry on each side, and which, to some extent, correspond with the rectangular chamber at the opposite extremity. These are apparently intended, not only to guard the entrance, by furnishing room for a large number of defenders, but also to enfilade the side walls. The rectangular chamber would be useful in the same manner, and if a corresponding one existed on the opposite side, the outer face of the walls would be commanded by these four bastions, or rather bastion-like defences. . . . The walls were probably never massive or high, but quite sufficient in a district where the Romans had established themselves so securely. At present they consist of little more than low banks of turf and stone, except, as stated above, at the entrance, which still retains portions of the wall in fair condition. The narrow Roman road running from Pont Aber Glaslyn, leading to Llyn Gwynant, passes close to it. Water may be procured at a very small distance to the fort. The sloping ground has been evidently selected as the most desirable for a permanent habitation. That the fort is Roman, no one who has seen it can doubt. Its dimensions and structure are such that it was never intended for a strong work, although sufficient for what it appears to have been intended, a kind of half-way resting-place from one station to another."

The "rectangular chamber" has been completely destroyed.

Ty Mawr and Capel Nanmor.—Leaving the field of the fort through a little gate by Beudy Newydd, we turn on the left and climb up the road a little way, when we come to Ty Mawr—once an old chapel of ease, and built at least as

early as the first Tudor king. It was called Capel Nanmor. Its measure from wall to wall on the inside was twenty feet by eighteen, and its main entrance was on the northern side, while a smaller door faced the south. It had one window on the northern side, one on the western, and two smaller ones on the southern side. The confessional is still standing, separated from the main part of the chapel by a fine oak panel with two doors. All its old oak carvings have been stripped, and made into picture frames and other ornaments. Its upper end has been used as a dwelling, as the large fireplace plainly shows. It was first so used a couple of generations

Capel Nanmor (by Ty Mawr).

after the erection of the dwelling-house proper, by members of the same family as occupied the house itself.

This part of the parish formerly belonged to Llanfair in Ardudwy, and there used to be a door in the old Llanfair church called Drws Gwyr Nanmor (The Door of the Men of Nanmor). We have already mentioned that the old Bedd Gelert church also had a door for the use of the men of Nanmor and Ardudwy. The following traditions aim at explaining the transferring of Nanmor from the parish of Llanfair to Bedd Gelert. The tenants of Nanmor were expected to give their presence in their parish church as often as they could, but every Easter Sunday each one had to be

present for Communion. Their path lay over Traeth Bach—the beach at the lower end of Maentwrog valley. They were accustomed to go all together, and once, while they were thus making for one of the Easter services, they found that the tide was filling in so rapidly that they hesitated to cross as usual. After discussing the matter together, they found that if they went round through Maentwrog, they would be too late for the service. They determined to ford the river, taking hold of each other by the hand, and thus cross in a line. But when they had reached the middle of the tide, they all lost their footing and were drowned. After this sad occurrence, the Nanmor people were allowed to take their Communion at Bedd Gelert, until Nanmor was made part of the Bedd Gelert parish.

The Llanfair side of Traeth Bach has a different tradition, which says that the vicar of Llanfair used to officiate once a month in Nanmor Chapel, and that he left it rather late one winter's Sabbath before starting for home, so that before he had reached Traeth Bach it was pitch dark. He managed, however, to cross the sands in safety, but by the time he had reached the little stream which runs by Cefn Trefor and Penbryn Isaf—not along the present Talsarnau and Harlech road, of course—Llyn Tecwyn had swollen it into a small torrent. Without suspecting danger, the vicar rode into the stream as usual, and both horse and rider were immediately swept away by the current, and drowned. After this, Capel Nanmor was given to Bedd Gelert, in exchange for a piece of land situated in the parish of Llanenddwyn, and known as "Y Parsel tuhwnt i'r Bont" (The Plot beyond the Bridge). The ditch or stream, where the priest was drowned, was called Camlas yr Offeiriad (The Parson's Ditch) for generations. We have been unable to find any one acquainted with that name of the little rivulet, but traces of the name remain in the name Ty Gwyn y Gamlas, near its estuary.

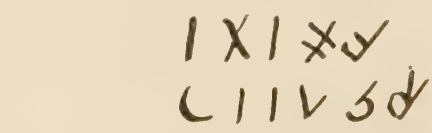
A reference is made in Principal Rhys's *Welsh Fairy Tales*, p. 54, to Twm Ifan Siams. "He lived at Nanmor, but I know not what his vocation was; his relations, however, were small farmers, carpenters, and masons." Twm lived at Ty Mawr, and had no particular trade, but worked a good deal as

a miner. He also spent a good deal of his time with the late Mr. Rumsey Williams, Penrhos, who had a special liking for the mischievous old peasant. Twm's practical jokes, of which he had endless resources, are still remembered and related as the most humorous anecdotes. His master and he used to play these off on one another so frequently that each was always on the lookout for a chance to pay off his debts. Others used to practise in this way on Twm, but nearly always to their sorrow; one man, however, did manage to escape even his suspicion. Mr. Rumsey Williams had promised a greyhound pup to a friend in Anglesey, and sent Twm with it to him. Before crossing the Menai Bridge ferry, he called for a pint of ale at the public-house by the water's side, throwing the bag and the puppy into a recess by the door. The innkeeper quietly took out the pup, and put a cat into the bag instead. Twm proceeded on his journey, and when he got to his destination he opened the bag, and out jumped the cat. His master's friend thought that a joke was being played on him, and Twm took little trouble to cool his indignation, but bagged the cat, and started off home again. He called at the public-house again, and tried to drown his anger. The pup was replaced unobserved, and the road home was covered in due time. "Why did you want to send me with this old cat to the gentleman, sir," growled Twm, "after promising him a greyhound pup?" "Send you with a cat?" said Mr. Williams. "Yes, an old cat, sir," and then opened the bag, when out frisked the little puppy. Twm was struck dumb with amazement, while his master stared at him. "The devil must be in this creature," exclaimed Twm at last; "in Carnarvonshire it is a puppy, while in Anglesey it is a cat. Catch me touching the old thing again." It dawned on his master at last that some one had been dealing with Twm in his own way, and got the pup sent on by another messenger.

Mr. Williams and a number of others were out coursing hares one day, when the Gwyrfai was rather full, after recent rains. One hare crossed the river, and, as there was no bridge close by, each man took his master on his back across the river. Twm picked up his burden, and after carrying him to

the middle of the stream asked him, "Who is master now, sir?" Fearing one of his practical jokes, his master tried to humour him, and said, "Oh, you are, Twm, you." "Very well, sir, it is too bad that the master should carry his servant; you must go down, sir," and dropped him with a splash, until he was drenched far worse than if he had walked through himself.

Carneddi to Berthlwyd.—Carneddi is a little way above Ty Mawr. The house is in a hollow, and is hidden from view by the out-houses. In this was born Hywel Gruffydd, the witty old poet whom we have met at Wenallt (Nant Gwynen), and as taking part in *David Prichard's Ghost Story*. He had two brothers, Robert and Richard, both of whom did good work for their parish in their day. Carneddog, the present tenant, is descended from them, and has inherited their gifts. He is a constant contributor to Mr. O. M. Edwards, M.A.'s, *Cymru*, and has written for years to our weekly journals. His little volume of poetry, *Ceinion y Cwm*, consists mainly of prize pieces, which the Welsh press noticed with genuine appreciation. He has very kindly helped us in many ways, especially by lending us a heap of paper-cuttings, and essays, on matters of local interest. If one takes an interest in the antiquities of the parish, one is always referred to Carneddog, whose proper name is Mr. Richard Griffith. Over the door of Carneddi are the following hieroglyphics, which is probably an old inscription from Ty Mawr or Capel Nanmor—



Below Carneddi are the two houses of Corlwyni, near which the path descends to a beautiful little valley within a valley. Instead of crossing the river to Tan y Rhiw, we had better take the Clogwyn path, right on through Buarthau to Berthlwyd. Robert Roberts, Clogwyn, has been mentioned in another chapter, in connection with Capel Gwynen. His life was only a short one, but its fragrance still remains. He was born at this place in 1769, and was left an orphan while still a

mere child. He was left in charge of his sisters, and was taken by the eldest, after her marriage, to her own home; but her husband made things unpleasant for the child, and another sister took him, apprenticing him to a shoemaker, when very young. Here again he was uncomfortable, so he escaped to a third sister, who had married the Rev. John Morgan, Llanberis, the curate whom Bingley met. He was warmly welcomed by his brother-in-law, and received every encouragement in his efforts for self-improvement. While at Llanberis he became very friendly with John Thomas, the itinerant Calvinistic Methodist minister, and sometimes accompanied him when he preached at the Bedd Gelert stations. He had thus accompanied him one Sunday, when a young woman, called Siân Prichard, recited a chapter before the minister in the morning service. She was a sterling young woman, and had provided the first minister who ever preached for the Nonconformists in Nanmor with a Bible, and a stool for a pulpit, when nearly every one else was afraid of persecutors. This had given her a kind of distinction, which Robert thought highly of, and he fell in love with her. On a later journey, John Thomas was asked to carry his proposal of marriage to her, which, after consulting her parents, she accepted. Clogwyn soon afterwards became vacant, and the young couple settled down in the birthplace of Robert Roberts.

Carneddog.

A more influential couple never lived within the parish, and both lived among the people like a pair of oracles, by whom all were led to do good things. Robert Roberts was the

kindest of men, but the terror of all who were conscious of wrong-doing. When the young men of the village insisted on playing ball on Sunday against the wall of the church, after the morning service, and neither vicar nor churchwardens could persuade them to desist, Robert could clear the churchyard without saying a word; his very appearance on the path towards the churchyard was enough. His grandson, William Roberts, who died in August 1892, followed in his grandfather's footsteps, and, in addition, left behind him a praiseworthy collection of papers and poetical pieces, which speak of him as a man of rustic culture.

Buarthau is still held by Mr. Jones, Sygun Fawr, and Berthlwyd is occupied by his daughter and son-in-law. Berthlwyd is an old mansion, the main features of which are still in existence, though hidden from view by wooden panels. The buildings in front of the house were old cottages, occupied by the married employees of the mansion. John Evans was the name of an old squire, who lived here about a hundred and six years ago, and at Hafod y Wernas there lived in his time an old woman called Siân ach Ifan, who irritated him in his later invalid days by the noise she made with her clogs, in passing back and fore through his yard for water, to the river below. When he complained to the old woman, she replied in four lines something thus :—

> Alas ! I'm but a daily drudge,
> I grudge to bear my sorrow ;
> This cripple now would claim the streams,
> While I, me seems, must borrow.

Lines to which Siôn Ifan never allowed any one to refer. It was this eccentric old woman who pulled up the potatoes, which her husband had stayed at home from the quarry to set. Potatoes happened to be very dear that year, and her husband had planted them with great care. When he had returned to his work, Siân picked them up, a few at a time. When their sprouting time had come, he pushed his fingers after the seed, to find out why it was that they did not show signs of life, but not one could he find. He asked Siân if she could explain

the mystery. "Oh, yes," was her pat reply, "I ate them; for what is the use of waiting a season for them, since they are so scarce now."

It was at Berthlwyd, too, John Prichard, the singer, lived, the father of the editor of the Wesleyan *Eurgrawn*, from 1815-17. His sons, Richard and David, began to preach during the time the Wesleyans had a cause at Ty Mawr, but Richard Jones never became more than a local preacher. John Prichard was a precentor at Bedd Gelert Church, and Berthlwyd became the rendezvous of all the young singers of the parish. Christmas Eve was spent in carol-singing, from the dusk of Christmas Eve to the dawn of Christmas morning. He had an accident while working as a stone mason at the Saracen's Head, but lived many years afterwards as a helpless cripple, still singing, and attracting around his bed the youths of miles round.

From the hill above Berthlwyd quarry we have a view of the Vale of Nanmor, of the charms of which few have any conception. Portmadoc is clearly seen in the distance, and the wooded juttings which stud the lowlands look truly beautiful. Arddu and Mynydd Nanmor rise high on either side, as if to watch the beauties of the vale developing. Behind us we have the familiar heights of Aran, Wyddfa, Lliwedd, Glyder Fach, etc., while the homesteads of Gelli Iago, Y Fedw Fach, and Llwyn yr Hwch are seen clinging to the side of Craig Llyn Llagi on our right.

A few neglected Houses.—We will now descend to the road down the valley, and by the bridge of Berthlwyd we see an old plot, which was once thronged with men and women, keen on the old Welsh games, devoting their Sabbaths to their pursuit. Many a hot contest has been waged here between the men of Nanmor and those of Nant Gwynen. This is one feature of the life of these parts upon which Robert Roberts, Clogwyn, laid such a fatal hand. Tan y Rhiw is the name of the first farmhouse on our left, the home of Robert Anwyl, Croesor,[1] during the earliest years of his married life. Gelli Wastad is now an out-house, and stands by the river-side below

[1] See *Cymru*, vol. xi.

Clogwyn. Ty Rhisgl—to which we must refer again—is a couple of fields lower down, on the same side of the river, below Corlwyni. By the side of the road, on the right, stands Fron Wen, and this too does duty at present as an outhouse. Yr Odyn is much nearer Cae Ddafydd, on the right-hand side of the road, and to this also we shall refer later on.

Cae Ddafydd and Dafydd Nanmor.—Cae Ddafydd (David's Meadow) is said to be so called after Dafydd Nanmor, who is

Dolfrïog. Arddu. Cae Ddafydd.

bracketed with Rhys Goch as the best of the bards of Eryri. Tradition says that the property of Ty Mawr, Tan y Rhiw, and Cae Ddafydd, was given by Rhys Goch to Dafydd Nanmor, and that the original building was erected by the favoured recipient of that gift. It is not known how long he lived here, and the history of the place lies in utter obscurity from his days until the beginning of the seventeenth century, when we find that William ab Rhys, Cae Ddafydd, married Elizabeth, daughter of Morris ab Ifan, Wern, Penmorfa. They were succeeded by their son, Lewis ab William, who dis-

continued the Welsh style of surname, and became Lewis Williams, Esq. He had two sons and one daughter, but the eldest boy, Morris Anwyl, died, and Robert inherited the property. His son entered into possession after the father's death in 1734, and as his only son died in 1748, the estate passed into the hands of William Williams, Llys Badrig, his nephew. William died in 1834, aged seventy-six, and left several children behind him. His son, Robert Anwyl, inherited Cae Ddafydd, but he himself went to live at Tan y Rhiw, renting Cae Ddafydd to the late John Priestley, Esq., Hendrefaig, Anglesey. Robert's eldest son, Morris, became a minister with the Calvinistic Methodists, but, owing to ill-health, his course at Bala was cut short. After recruiting his health a little, he devoted himself to the service of his home district, holding night schools, etc., for the benefit of his less favoured comrades. It puzzles us to know how Cae Ddafydd fell into the hands of his brother David, for it was from him the late Mr. Jackson, Dolfriog, bought it, and it was from the latter's trustees the late Mr. J. Priestley purchased it, some time between 1847 and 1850. By this purchase the property returned to the descendants of Rhys Goch. Through Major Priestley, Plas Hen, Chwilog, and the late Mr. Samuel Priestley, who met his sad end while hunting in 1897, the estate has come into the hands of Mr. F. J. Lloyd Priestley, son of the rector of Hen Eglwys, Anglesey. The house as it stands was built in 1852, and A. Browning Priestley, Esq., who now lives at Cae Ddafydd, has lately added a fine set of out-buildings. Such, then, is a brief outline of the history of the property of Cae Ddafydd, as far as records help us.

The story of the genius who gave it the name it bears has unfortunately been left to the mercy of tradition. Both Harlech and Penmorfa claim to be his birthplace, and Erw Deg, Penmorfa, is confidently spoken of by many as the very house in which he first saw the light of day. Rhys Goch, it is said, had heard that a remarkable lad lived at Erw Deg, to whom the muses were very friendly, and he set out one day to visit him. As he crossed Traeth Mawr, he passed a number of children gathering cockles, and addressed them :—

What ! gathering shells ? Cold work in snow !

to which one of the lads immediately replied—

This sun makes summer too, you know.

Rhys was startled, and said, "Hulloa ! my lad ; thou can'st do something better than gather cockles ; come with me." He took him home to his mother, and got permission to take him with him to Hafod Garegog, where he gave him some light work to do, taught him the rudiments of knowledge, and cultivated his muse.

The Harlech tradition says that Rhys was crossing Traeth Bach, on his way to the court at Harlech, and that he met a number of people on their way to Traeth Mawr, to gather cockles. He addressed them, after the manner of the bards, in words which Elvet renders thus :—

What ! gathering shells ? Too soon, I trow ;
See Snowdon yonder white with snow.

To which a lad from the group replied :—

Strange, is it not ? there should be snow ;
This sun makes summer too, you know.

This ready repartee so pleased and surprised Rhys, that he got his mother to consent to his entering his service. The sequel is as before.

In Nanmor, however, Dafydd is spoken of as Rhys's natural son, whom he adopted when he found that he was a lad of parts, and possessed of his own poetic gift. Dafydd was a thoughtful and reserved lad, seldom heard to utter a line of poetry except when roused to it by some incident. His duty at Hafod Garegog was to attend to the fowls and tame birds. Not having heard Dafydd setting forth anything in poetry for some time, Rhys once contrived to get him excited. He told one of the servants to hide an old mother-goose from her seven goslings, and then ask Dafydd where the goose had gone to. The man carried out Rhys's plan, and the lad became deeply concerned, and searched for the old goose everywhere. Rhys after a time followed him, and found him crying.

"Halloo, Dai," said he, "what is the matter? What are you weeping for?" Dafydd wiped his eyes, and answered—

For that old proud-billed goose I weep;
Her seven goslings cry for sleep.
Has no one heard her cackling shrill,
Just as a gander sometimes will?

Rhys was delighted with his reply, and devoted himself more than ever to cultivating his muse, and training him in other ways, with the result that at an Eisteddfod held at Hafod Garegog, Dafydd, while yet a stripling, carried off the chief prizes against all the bards. In outward appearance he is said to have been a big, tall, awkward-looking man; and his life was even, contrasting very favourably with the loose notion of life which the contemporary bards had. His reserved manner, coupled with his brilliance, made him an object of antipathy to his fellow-bards—a feeling which they showed at an Eisteddfod held at Ty Mawr, when, on feigned offence, they tried to bolt the door against him, and when Dafydd quietly hurled the door into the middle of the floor, and took his seat among them as if nothing had happened.

In Rhys Goch's "Satire on the Fox," a wish is expressed that Dafydd's peacock might meet the same fate as his own had met, because it had been trained to carry love messages to Gwen of Dolfrïog—abbreviated frequently as "Dôl." From that wish, and the following lines, a story of rivalry for Gwen is built up:—

Gwen of the Dale I love—my star,—
Whose waxen cheeks like Helen's are;
But, ah! the bitterness to me,
A man of Snowdon loveth she:
David of Nanmor—mighty name,
Oft whispered on the lips of Fame.

ELVET, *trans.*

Others think that such lines are only the exercises of teacher and pupil, the fruit of innocent fun and playfulness, and that Gwen's name was freely used by the right of friendship. We rather favour the view which takes the matter seriously, and are inclined to think that Dafydd's success was the real cause

of his sudden disappearance from the district. He is said to have left owing to a quarrel into which he had been drawn, and the opinion that it was with his great benefactor serves better than any other to explain why he never returned to the neighbourhood again. He escaped to Cardiganshire, and became the family bard of the lords of Isaeron (South Cardiganshire), living with them at Towyn, near Cardigan. He was present at the great "first Eisteddfod" at Carmarthen, which was held under the patronage of Gruffydd ab Nicolas, "who obtained the guarantee and the privilege of safety on his journey there and back, under the letters patent of the King—Henry, the Saint of Windsor—in the twenty-first year of his reign. . . . Llawdden was adjudged the best master of metres in Wales, Gwilym Tew the most well-up in the ancient customs, and the most versed in the ancient art of impromptu poetry, as well as the most skilled in its use, was Dafydd Nanmor." He was buried at Whitland, Carmarthenshire. Unless he married Gwen o'r Ddôl, nothing is known of his wife. His son, Rhys Nanmor, was a clergyman in St. David's, Pembrokeshire, and was buried at Llangyndeyrn, Carmarthenshire. It is quite probable that Rhys never saw Nanmor.

Bwlch Gwernog.—We leave Cae Ddafydd and come to Bwlch Gwernog—a couple of houses, low-roofed, and with their backs to the road. The first Sabbath School in Nanmor was held in one of these, when occupied by the old saint, Ann Dafydd. It was held in the evening, to avoid the annoyance of persecutors. The class surrounded an old-fashioned marketing basket turned upside down, having its uprights pushed into the earthen floor to keep it firm, and its sides stuck with rush-lights. While the eager readers tried to get at the meaning of what they read in this dim light, one member of the class devoted his attention to snuffing, with forefinger and thumb, the consuming rush-lights, taking in all he heard, but seldom venturing to take part in the arguments. It was not long before the Sabbath School became too large for Bwlch Gwernog, when other houses opened their doors for the promiscuous scholars, until at last the school found a permanent home at Peniel.

The Wonders of Arddu.—We may now take the old parish road to Croesor, to see the old Roman road, which now goes parallel with it, now crosses it, in a zigzag fashion. Just above Bwlch Gwernog may be seen an old rampart, and the whole district is simply littered with the remains of huts and cytiau. At a distance of about half a mile, on the right-hand side of the road, we find the remains of an old Roman station. It is an enclosure of some fifteen feet diameter, surrounding the ruins of three circular huts. It is near this point the Roman pack-horse path from Nant Gwynen joined the one from Aberglaslyn.

The road leads under the rugged ridges of Arddu, among the boulders of which was once—and may still be, but we have not found it—Ogof y Gareg Bengam (The Cave of the Wry-Headed Stone), also called Ogof Tyrpin Lofrydd (The Cave of Turpin the Murderer). The tradition is that a dangerous highway robber abode in this wild and isolated place, and robberies frequently occurred on the Arddu roads. People from Festiniog districts went in those days to do their marketing at Carnarvon, and quite a number of people were missed, from time to time, between Aberglaslyn and Croesor; no explanation could be given, and no traces of the missing ones could be found. At last the body of a murdered man was found on Arddu, and the mystery was partly solved. The murderer was searched for in vain, until the shepherd of Cae Ddafydd one day, while engaged on Arddu, saw a great giant-like man stretched in the shade, near Y Gareg Bengam, sleeping soundly. On approaching him noiselessly, he saw a heavy sword by his side, and the marks of blood on his clothes. It struck him at once that this was the robber, so he boldly stepped forward, seized the sword, and struck off his head with one blow. He then ran down to Cae Ddafydd, and nervously related his adventure. The news of it spread like fire, and the people flocked to see the monster. Arguing that the fox could not be far from his lair, they made a successful search for his hiding-place. The cave contained a quantity of valuable articles, and was afterwards called Ogof Tyrpin Lofrydd.

Between Arddu and Cnicht lies Bwlch y Fatel (The Battle Pass), where the engagement between Ieuan ab Robert and

William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, took place. That engagement explains the various daggers and short swords which have been found in these parts from time to time.

Dolfrïog.—The lodge which guards the entrance to the grounds of the beautiful little mansion of Dolfrïog, stands about a stone's throw from Bwlch Gwernog. Mr. Lowson's stable and coach-house now occupy the spot where once stood old Dolfrïog, the home of Gwen in the fifteenth century. The pretty name "Dolfrïog" is a modification of Dôl Fierog (A Bramble-Abounding Meadow). The history of the place is lost until the Anwyls begin to leave traces of their occupation, towards the end of the seventeenth century. One Hugh Anwyl was born in 1760, who has left behind him the reputation of having been an ardent persecutor of the early Methodists of Nanmor, for which Providence visited upon him the curse of bankruptcy. This is the man who brought the first cart into Nanmor, and through whose bankruptcy the charity of Mrs. Jones and Morris Anwyl was lost. Hugh Anwyl removed, after his misfortune, to Macntwrog, and the property passed into the hands of Wilson Jones, Esq., Gelli Gynan, Denbigh. About the beginning of this century, a certain Captain White lived at Dolfrïog, with the wife of the rector of Dolbenmaen, who was one of Nelson's chaplains. After him came John Thomas, son of the rector of Llanfrothen. Folk-lore tells a story of his engaging the son of a witch, living at Ty Mawr, on condition that he would raise a hare every time he went out hunting during the first month. On the first day of the experiment, a hare appeared, but neither the dogs nor the gun could reach it; it seemed to appear and vanish at the boy's will. This happened for several days, and Mr. Thomas became impatient. It chanced that a friend, who was quite an expert at hare-coursing, came to visit him during those very days, and he advised him to procure a black greyhound, without a single white hair, and to set it after the hare. The greyhound was, with difficulty, procured, and set after the hare, which made straight for Ty Mawr. Just as it was leaping over the lower half of the door of the house, Mr. Thomas fired. No trace of the hare could be found anywhere, but the lad's mother was

found in the house suffering dreadfully from the shots of the gun. The witch recovered, but never allowed a black greyhound to chase her again. This Mr. Thomas shot himself while out with his gun on a Sunday, which the old folks interpreted as the witch's revenge.

Mr. Jackson, a gentleman from Somersetshire, bought Dolfrïog about 1830, and removed to it from Pen y Bryn, Nant Gwynen, where he had been residing for a time. He soon began to build for himself a new residence, and almost transformed the place, so many were his improvements; but his extravagant tastes brought about financial difficulties, and it was only after his sudden death, which happened in Paris, that Mrs. Jackson completed her little mansion, and removed there to live. She died in 1864. Her trustees sold the property to the late Mr. Breese, and the late Dr. Arthur Farre, F.S.A., physician, we believe, to the Prince of Wales, became his tenant in 1870. It was bought by J. E. Greaves, Esq., Lord-Lieutenant of Carnarvonshire, in 1880, and the late Judge Sir Watkin Williams and his family lived there for about two years, prior to his death in 1884. It was once rumoured that Madame Patti had some intentions of taking Dolfrïog, before she finally decided to settle down at Craig y Nos.

William Lowson, Esq., who bought the property in 1885, tells us that his choice of Dolfrïog was mainly due to the strong resemblance which its surroundings have to those of his native parts in Scotland. Its beauty and solitude are such as a real Celt always revels in. The Bath stone window-frames and chimneys, together with the fine oak wood-work, which is to be found all through the house, are valuable embellishments bequeathed by the fastidious extravagances of Mr. Jackson. Mr. Lowson has spent thousands of pounds upon the new drive, the large gardens, his excellent farm-buildings, and perfect drainage, and has made a good-sized reservoir upon a neighbouring hill, which gives a never-failing supply of water. The water, however, makes the use of silvers as household wares impossible; it eats silver as if it had been pricked with needles, and even strong galvanised iron tanks and cylinders cannot withstand its virulence for more than about fifteen

months. The house is therefore equipped with copper wares. Mr. and Mrs. Lowson seem to enjoy life among our Welsh hills, and to be in great favour with the people among whom they have settled.

As we return to Nanmor village, we pass Hendre Fechan, once the home of the crippled schoolmaster of Peniel. On a field belonging to this little farmhouse stands a stone pillar, on which rests a slab bearing an inscription, which we may translate thus: "A Memorial Stone marking the spot whereon David, the son of Pierce and Jane Davies, Hendre Fechan, was struck dead by lightning, October 1st, 1853. He was a boy quick at learning, and remarkable for his obedience and application." Then follows an englyn by Eben Fardd, which runs somewhat thus :—

A lightning flash, with sudden blow,
A lad of promise here laid low ;
Ere of this life he'd tasted aught,
For life beyond by death was sought.

Only one flash of lightning appeared at all, and his sister, who stood by him, was struck down, but not seriously injured. His father, Mr. Pierce Davies—Pirs Dafydd, as he was called—farmed this little tenement for many years. He was a man of exceptional abilities, and deeply respected ; he became, in time, steward of Pant Mawr and Cwmllan quarries, and had from first to last the entire confidence of both men and masters. He ended his days at Portmadoc, where two of his sons, Messrs. Davies Bros., carry on a flourishing business as slate merchants.

CHAPTER XXIII

RELIGIOUS AND EDUCATIONAL AWAKENINGS[1]

I. RELIGIOUS.—In writing of the religious life of the parish in this chapter, we wish to say at the outset that our remarks will be mostly confined to that phase of it which is now identified with Nonconformity. It will also be seen that the educational movement was the first, and that the religious movement gradually grew out of it, and drove it for a while into the background, until the former asserted itself again, and took its place side by side with the spiritual movement.

It was about the year 1765 that genial and talented Robert Jones, Rhoslan, came to Bedd Gelert to conduct one of the circulating schools of Madame Bevan. The school was kept in the gallery at the western end of the old church, where a number of children, and a few young people, were instructed, in the catechetical method adopted in the circulating schools. Robert Jones had been thrust into the work by Madame Bevan herself. He had walked, when a lad of eighteen, from Sintir, near Criccieth, to Laugharne, Carmarthenshire, to pray that good woman to send a travelling master to labour among the hills of North Wales. The good lady was from home, and his 200 mile journey was in vain. Nothing daunted, he went the second time, and found her at home. She gave his plea a respectful hearing, but refused to entertain his request, as she had been sorely disappointed in the masters whom she had appointed to work at a distance. Being deeply impressed with his own earnestness and simplicity of bearing, however, she offered to make a grant, provided he undertook the work himself. His yearning for the ignorant youth of North Wales led him to agree to the condition; and he selected Bedd

[1] Materials for this chapter are taken from *Methodistiaeth Cymru*, *Llenor I.*, *Cymru*, 1898, and MSS. kindly lent by Mr. John Jones, Nanmor, and others.

Gelert as his first centre. As he had only received six weeks' tuition from a master, his qualification for the post was mainly due to his own perseverance and labours. His winning manner gave him easy access into the confidence of the children, and as the ultimate object of those schools was to teach religion, the children got new notions of life, and new facts for thought.

An oft-repeated story serves very well to show what curiosity his youth, and the novelty of his work, aroused among the people, and what ignorance prevailed. When the children returned home at evening, the parents put them no end of questions; and it happened one afternoon that Robert Jones sent the children home with the question, "Where is the church?"—intending to instruct the children in the morning on what "a church" means. When one little girl repeated the question at home, her father said, "Huff! is that the sort of master you have? 'Where is the church?' and he teaching in it every day!" The child repeated her father's remark to the master next morning. "Ask your father, my child," said the good-natured teacher, "how it is that the church is represented as having ears." When the farmer heard the second question, he said, with a mocking laugh, "What a duffer! What is easier than to see that the belfry is the ear?"

Robert Jones, Rhoslan.

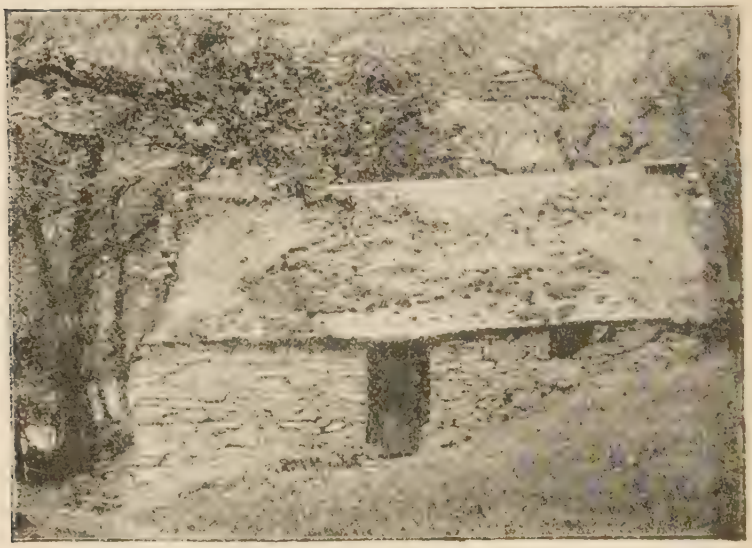
Among those who had turned in more than once to hear Robert Jones catechising the children, was a young weaver from Cwm Bychan, Nanmor, who afterwards became known as Robert Dafydd, Brynengan. The truths which thus fell on his ears reached his heart, and he became an entirely different man. This sudden change in a leader of the mischievous youths of the neighbourhood roused the ire of the thoughtless, and Robert Jones was persecuted for "driving Robert Dafydd mad." While at Bedd Gelert, the school-

master had been able to tell his convert of the movements of the Methodist itinerants, so as to enable him and his young friend, Owen Thomas, to get more light on their moral and spiritual condition. But the time soon came for Robert Jones to depart, and the two young men had to face persecutions alone. Robert Dafydd's father had died while he was a mere child, and his mother when he was about twelve; so his uncle adopted him, and taught him his father's trade. When the young weaver began to manifest a fondness for running after itinerant preachers, the uncle did not hesitate to offer him a choice between his home and his religion; and Robert did not hesitate to choose the latter, and left Nanmor for Brynengan. Owen Thomas removed to Anglesey.

As far as we know, all that was left of the fruit of Robert Jones's work at Bedd Gelert, were the slumbering forces which he had drummed into the minds and hearts of the children. Seventeen years passed away, and another unexpected ray of hope shone upon the district, in the person and labours of Henry Thomas, the son of the innkeeper of Aberglaslyn village. His father had sent him to Botwnog Grammar School, with a view to getting him into the Church. While there, he came under the influence of itinerant preachers, the spell of whose sanctified eloquence got so firm a hold upon him, that he would walk great distances to hear them. His father sent for him, and put him back at his last. Coercion could not create a taste for shoemaking, and he soon put up a day-school, with the object of teaching children how to read and write, so that they might the more easily receive religious instruction. Owen Owen, Cae Ddafydd, took a kindly interest in him, and so helped to overcome the hostility of the ignorant, which the home-brewed of Tafarn Telyn did much to keep alive. A large number of children flocked to the old corn-kiln, which Owen placed at his disposal; and young and grown-up people also sought his aid. The religious instruction led to the establishing of prayer-meetings; the work increased, the attendance rapidly improved, and sacred music rang through the beautiful little Vale of Nanmor. The old corn-kiln was just above Dolfrïog, where Hugh Anwyl lived, and

he fumed with rage at "the noisy round-heads." The devotional meetings had therefore to be held elsewhere, and an old covered sheep fold was first used: then a building used for storing bark was given for that purpose by the tenant of Corlwyni.

Robert Dafydd had now commenced to preach, and Henry Thomas sent him an invitation to preach at Nanmor. He



Yr Hen Odyn (The Old Corn-Kiln).

was prevented from fulfilling his promise, and Robert Jones undertook to substitute him. As no one had preached in the district before, except at Capel Nanmor, the novelty of the service attracted a large crowd, many of whom were bent on a little fun. It was a sore trial to try and preach while a number in the rear of his audience kept laughing, joking, and scoffing. When he had been at it for some time, and was almost disheartened, a terrific storm of thunder and lightning suddenly came on, and both audience and preacher were for

a moment mute. Looking at last into the very eyes of the people, he began to use his opportunity in speaking of the thunders of God against every form of ungodliness: and terror fell upon all present. Tender ministrations afterwards led forth many on the side of faith, from a crisis into which the twofold thunders had driven them. Another sermon was preached not long afterwards at the same place by Griffith Jones, Ynys y Pandy, when two young men bent on annoying, if not injuring, the preacher, were brought to better things. These two events broke down much of the opposition which the good work had met.

After Henry Thomas had married Marslie Powell, Hafod y Rhisgl, and removed to Hen Stamps, by Bryn y Felin, the school was left in charge of a young woman, Jane Thomas by name. The church met now at Hen Stamps, but after a time Henry became afflicted with melancholy, and the cause was left in charge of his brother Richard. The inconvenience of worshipping while Henry worked in the next room ultimately proved too much for the brethren, and an offer of Ty'n y Coed, on the land of Meillionen, was accepted from Mr. and Mrs. Hughes, who had a short time previously removed to the latter place from Anglesey. Being a solicitor, Mr. Hughes inspired persecutors with a little fear, and the cause progressed very well; several of the best men which the early cause possessed, joined the movement at Ty'n y Coed. After a time, Henry Thomas recovered, but soon removed to Waen Fawr, and his brother Richard succumbed to a lingering illness. A little later, Mr. Hughes died, and the church met but for a little longer at Ty'n y Coed, before it was removed to Pen y Bont Fawr—a house which the coffee-room of Prince Llewelyn Hotel has replaced. This was the first meeting-place for which rent was paid; but it answered so well that the congregation greatly increased.

Several sects tried to get a hearing in the parish during these years, including the well-reputed Moravians of Drws y Coed; but two sects of uncertain teaching made only a weak attempt, and then passed out of sight. A strong desire at last possessed the Methodist brethren to secure a permanent home

for the cause, and the difficulty of getting a plot for a chapel was overcome by exchanging a Parliamentary vote for that favour, as already mentioned. Services were afterwards held with some regularity, and advantage was taken of the itinerant preachers, who supplied for the Sundays, by holding the weekly fellowship meetings on Saturday evenings, when all work was finished for the week. The church progressed in every way, until the European unrest, created by the Napoleonic wars, brought about a reaction. The high prices of agricultural produce, and the flourishing condition of mining and quarrying industries, made the people so flush, and made riot and drunkenness so common, that the modest Christians were afraid to assert themselves. Three annual hunts, periodical fairs, and the regular pay nights, gave ample opportunity to the rougher elements of the parish.

It was some time during these years that the Wesleyans tried what they could do to stem the current, holding services at Ty Mawr and Cwm Cloch. They made good headway for a while, but the want of caution, and the too free use of banter against their Calvinistic brethren, provoked some of their listeners to defiance. The respect of the people for the leaders of the Calvinists was deeper than the people themselves thought, and some of the younger men replied openly to the banter, and challenged the speakers to a decision of issues by a fight. The Wesleyans ultimately withdrew.

After years of trying lifelessness and indifference, the atmosphere began to grow lighter about the years 1815-16. But the consummation did not come until one Sunday evening, in August 1817, when Richard William, Brynengan, was preaching at Hafod y Llan, Nant Gwynen. The preacher usually began his Sabbath duties at Talyrni, Nanmor, where he preached in the morning; he would then cross through Blaen Nanmor to Nant Gwynen by two o'clock in the afternoon, and would walk to Bedd Gelert to conduct an evening service. Bedd Gelert and Hafod y Llan exchanged services on the above-mentioned Sunday, because the great John Elias was preaching at Tremadoc in the evening, and the inhabitants of the lower part of the parish wanted to go and hear him.

So the congregation of Hafod y Llan consisted of people from Nant Gwynen and Upper Nanmor.

The service itself began very quietly. Nothing unusual was felt during the devotional part, but as the preacher proceeded with his discourse, heart after heart became absorbed, while the preacher was being gradually swept from truth to truth. A feeling of intense awe possessed all present, and every one felt the presence of a suppressed Pentecost. An occasional cry or sob relieved a few hearts, and one young man, William Roberts, Clogwyn, actually shouted out a cry of despair; and when the preacher was at last able to pronounce the benediction, the congregation scattered without attempting the hymn which had been given out. The people walked home in groups, but spoke little to one another. A kind of awe now possessed the whole of this part of the parish, and people talked of nothing on Monday but of the marvellous visitation of God. It must now be remembered that though services were held at three different places in the parish, all the church fellowship meetings were held at Bedd Gelert. When the deacons, who had been waiting at the chapel-house for the hour of the fellowship meeting to arrive, saw a chapel full of people gathered together, they thought that some one must have spread a false rumour, and that they were expecting a preacher. How great was their surprise to find them all presenting themselves for membership. The catechising and exhorting were so minutely accomplished in the case of every individual, that only a few candidates were dealt with that night, and several subsequent meetings were devoted to that work.

The meetings now became very demonstrative, and the people shouted and leaped for joy, in the hearty old Methodist way. The hills rang with the hymns and hallelujahs as they journeyed to and fro. This glowing enthusiasm lasted until nearly every inhabitant of the parish had been stirred, and about two hundred had joined the church for the first time. Ministers from all parts of Wales became eager to witness the revival, and each one helped to fan the flame, and carried away with him, to other districts, a spiritual aroma as delicious as

the fragrance of unfolding foliage in spring. Within the parish the revival moved by definite steps. It had hardly become a force in Bedd Gelert at all until Nant Gwynen had been completely roused; and though its forces fell upon the village in September, it was Christmas before Nanmor came under its spell, though isolated individuals had been moved by it before.

This revival had a mysterious precursor, or accompanying feature, known as *music in the air*. It has been described as an undefinably sweet harmony, produced by a myriad angelic voices, which blended together in the softest tones. There was no distinct melody, but the music pinned each hearer to the spot on which he stood, as if all power of motion had left him. Scores have recorded their testimonies of having heard this music, and each one speaks of it as something which defies every definition. The late Griffith Prichard, father of Messrs. Prichard Brothers, Portmadoc, has left behind him a manuscript story of the revival, in which he tells us of the occasion on which he heard the *music in the air*. His parents lived at Talyrni, and had gone one Saturday evening to the church meeting at Bedd Gelert. It was Christmas Eve, 1817, and he and his sister kept house. About nine o'clock he happened to go to the window, and there suddenly fell upon his ear the sound of a host of voices. He imagined at first that he understood the words of the singers, but he soon

Griffith Prichard.

discovered his mistake. The sweetness of the music acted on him like a spell; his whole nature seemed quite overcome by its unspeakable charms and powers. He could not say how long it lasted, but it glided slowly overhead, until it became inaudible beyond Llanfrothen. When his parents returned he asked them whether there had been much rejoicing at Bedd Gelert that evening, and whether anything extraordinary had happened. They assured him that nothing unusual had happened, when he related to them the story of "the invisible choir." "The revival," shouted one of them, "the revival is coming to Nanmor!"

On Christmas morning Edward Jones, Llangwyryfon, Cardiganshire, preached at Talyrni. The devotional part was conducted by the late Rev. David Jones, Bedd Gelert, and while he was engaged in prayer, a crowd of people from Bedd Gelert approached, singing one of the favourite hymns of the revival, and the audience felt something lifting it away from its surroundings. The preacher was soon in the spirit, and his every sentence seemed to pierce the very hearts of his audience. A certain magnetism drew the scoffers from the doorway, and placed them gazing into the preacher's face, and made them drink in every word as if existence itself depended upon them. On the second Sunday in the New Year, Richard William, Brynengan—the man who first hurled the brand among the elements—preached at Talyrni in the morning. His sermon on that morning was tremendous in its power and results. His text was Hebrews xi. 7, and so forcibly did he apply his truths to the condition of his hearers, that many of them were heard to shout aloud that the door of the ark was being closed against them, and that all their hopes were gone.

This fire lasted for three years. The last service of the revival type, of which we have any account, was held at Talyrni. John Elias was announced to preach at Bedd Gelert one Saturday evening in 1820, on his way to Tremadoc for the Sunday. As the Nanmor people walked home together, they were engaged in discussing the morrow. It was customary to follow Mr. Elias from one place to another for long distances,

and it seemed not only bad taste, but a slight on the great

(With Mr. O. M. Edwards's Per

man, not to do so. But these people were now in straits between two things. There was the service at Talyrni, in

which an insignificant preacher—Robert Siôn Hugh—would preach at the very same hour as John Elias was to preach at Tremadoc; and how could Talyrni service be put off? Jane Prichard, the widow of Robert Roberts, Clogwyn, had remained behind doing some messages at the village, so they determined to wait until she came up to them. When she was asked at what time should they meet at Aberglaslyn Bridge the next morning, on their way to Tremadoc, she replied: "You may meet whenever you please. I am not going." "Not going to hear John Elias?" "No," she replied. "Robert Siôn Hugh is to preach at Talyrni to-morrow morning, and he is as truly a servant of Jesus Christ, according to the gift which he has received, as John Elias is, according to the gift given to him."

Next morning the people met, and walked along discussing Siân Prichard's extraordinary comparison between two men whom they considered as far removed from one another as the poles. They could not solve such a conundrum, and something about the remark made their journey very uncomfortable, so they determined to ford the Glaslyn, and hurry over to Talyrni. Meanwhile a few children and Siân Prichard sat at Talyrni, while Robert Siôn Hugh read a chapter and offered prayer. Just as he was taking his text, the others walked in, and the first words which fell on their ears were, "If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way." Siân Prichard's joy at seeing the company return broke forth into tears, which set the preacher in a fix, and the people somehow—no one knows how—had such a time of it, that a large number passed through a great crisis, for which they could never thank God sufficiently.

Three great revivals have influenced this district, since this one which originated within the district, and which is known as the "Bedd Gelert Revival." One was that of 1832, which resulted in rousing the people to their responsibility in the training of children in religious matters; the next was the revival of 1859, known as the "Revival of David Morgan, Ysbytty," which drove the whole country on its knees, and awoke the people to the importance of prayer; and the last

was that of thirteen years ago, which laid stress on Christian fellowship, and convinced the churches that spiritual success does not depend on great talents merely. But the effect of the "Revival of Bedd Gelert" was to drive men to the Scriptures, and to show them the value of knowledge as a pathway to their God. This resulted in the establishing of Sunday Schools more generally, and in an earnest desire to revive the simplicity of worship, which was characteristic of apostolic times.

That they grasped the Gospel teaching is amply proved by an old Sunday School minute book before us. The Talyrni school drew up an account of its condition and labours every two months, when the teachers reported progress, and the children were moved from grade to grade—from the rudiments to the Catechism, from the Catechism to the New Testament, and lastly to the Old Testament. Two men were told off to hunt up absentees, and to seek fresh members. A box was made to hold the coppers of the scholars, which formed a fund for supplying needy children with clothes for winter, so as to enable them to attend Sabbath School without endangering their health. Each teacher was requested to inquire what preparations the children's parents were making for their winter comforts, so as to enable the teachers' meeting to decide how the money should be divided. Great questions of theology were discussed in the school, led by an able catechist; the answers were almost invariably clothed in words of Scripture, until the scholars almost unconsciously became very familiar with their Bibles. Hymn and tune books were out of the question in those days, so the musical part of the services was done as best it could; but in order to improve and expand it a new tune was practised at the close of the school, and nothing fresh was attempted until that was thoroughly learnt.

II. Educational.—One of the most distressing and yet most triumphant chapters in Welsh history is that of its education; and from the time when gross ignorance covered the greatest part of the principality to the planting of intermediate schools within every district of importance in its

counties, nothing like a hundred years is necessary to measure the extremes. The change has been wrought by men whose foresight and patient labours were hardly second to their love for their native land, and their illiterate fellow-countrymen. When the history of Welsh education is written, as ere long it must be, it will be a chapter of heroism and self-sacrifice of the purest kind. We have here, however, only the question of education at Bedd Gelert to deal with, and that only very meagrely.

What was done to carry on the educational work begun by Robert Jones, author of *Drych yr Amseroedd* (*Mirror of the Times*), and again taken up by Henry Thomas, and Jane Thomas, we are not told. Nicholson in his *Guide* (p. 114) writes: "William Lloyd, the schoolmaster of this place, was long noted as an intelligent 'conductor to Snowdon, Moel Hebog, Dinas Emrys, Llanberis Pass, the lakes, waterfalls, &c.; he was also a collector of crystals, fossils, and natural curiosities found in these regions, dealer in superfine woollen hose, socks, gloves, &c.,' but in the year 1804 he finally emerged from all sublunary associations to the regions beyond the grave. His widow had lately a considerable quantity of fossils in her possession for sale." This suggests to us that the schoolmaster was either free during the summer months, or that he was able to dismiss the school whenever his services as guide were in demand. A Miss Watkins taught in the old church gallery for a short time: and Glasynys did a little in that way in exchange for tuition by the Rev. W. Hughes. We have been unable to find evidence to confirm the statement that James Hews Bransby taught at Bedd Gelert, which may have been first made on the assumption that his little volume on the neighbourhood was the fruit of his residence. But if we mistake not, he taught at Bangor.

Side by side with the efforts in the church were the steady labours of the Nonconformists, carried on through the instrumentality of the late Mr. John Roberts, who came to Bedd Gelert about 1825. He was a man of good education, tact, and application; the school was held in the Methodist Chapel. The religious revival of 1817-20 had awakened the

people to the value of education, but the pecuniary resources of the peasants did not allow them—even if they believed in it—to pay their schoolmaster a good salary. What was paid him was collected in small sums from door to door, monthly and quarterly, and augmented by proceeds from concerts and lectures. This drudgery would have been impossible with any one less successful than Mr. Roberts. He left Bedd Gelert in 1843, and became clerk to the late Mr. D. Williams, M.P. Who immediately followed him we know not, but a young man of the name of D. D. Jones—now Rev. D. D. Jones, Bangor—was filling the post not long afterwards. One day, during his time, a couple of tramps entered the chapel, and frightened the children so much that nearly all of them escaped through the windows, considerably damaging themselves and the property. The school was removed to the club-room pending renovations, and was never allowed to return again.

Kingsley's, Carnarvon, Photo.)
The late Mr. John Roberts, Postmaster.

In the Report of the State of Education in Wales (1847) nothing is said of Bedd Gelert. Why H. V. Johnson, Esq., should visit Capel Curig, of which so little good could be said, and pass by Bedd Gelert, where evidence of good and faithful work awaited his inquiry as a Commissioner, is not difficult to divine. It is no wonder that this incomplete and one-sided report roused these districts—which had worked and sacrificed—to the highest point of indignation. But good came of this travesty, and the Bedd Gelert Nonconformists gave a hearty

response to the appeals of men like Sir Hugh Owen, Henry Richards, and others, to take advantage of the British School System. Seven responsible men signed a memorial to the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education on December 12, 1849, seeking aid for the erection of a school and a master's house, to be connected with the *British and Foreign School Society*. "In this district," runs the memorial, "there are no schools for the children of the labouring poor, nor any other school whatever, except one kept in a chapel temporary."

The Council forwarded a building form, which was filled up and returned, together with the plans of the proposed new school. The local committee seems to have proceeded with the buildings, without clearly understanding the conditions on which the Council of Education insisted. A parlour, kitchen, and two bedrooms were all that had been provided in the master's house, and the bedrooms were lower by two feet than the stipulations of headquarters. Over the scullery and extra bedroom a lengthy and anxious correspondence ensued, and the local authorities would have been left with £68 instead of £150 but for their dogged perseverance, and the help of an influential member of the House of Commons. The Rev. John Phillips, Bangor, dictated the correspondence for the local committee, and the late John Jones, Glan Gwynant, as Secretary, copied it out and forwarded it to London, signed by himself on behalf of the committee. On one occasion he ventured to send the Council Committee a letter in Welsh, pleading ignorance of the conditions as an excuse for not literally carrying out the committee's instructions regarding the master's house. The letter was returned with a note stating "that all correspondence with this department must be conducted in English." The department would probably not do that now, and Mr. R. R. W. Lingen need not have gone far for an honest and capable interpreter.

The entire work had cost £390 : 10s., and the department only made a grant of £68 towards the school buildings, and crossed out the words "with a master's house." A manly reply was sent in acknowledging this amount, stating that the

local committee was "greatly disappointed and disheartened at the statement made in your last communication, namely, that only £68 was being promised towards the buildings; neither are they able to understand how such a locality as Bedd Gelert is treated in this manner, when other places far more wealthy have had grants to the amount of three times the sum." Five days later the sum was raised to £102, but it did not satisfy; and Mr. Williams, M.P., St. Asaph, called Mr. Lingen to account for his breach of faith and contract. The latter had promised that if Mr. Williams undertook, on behalf of the promoters of the school, to pay £250, the committee would make a grant of £150. This Mr. Lingen denied in a letter to Mr. Williams, but suggested that the Lord President "would attach due weight to your official position in deciding upon the merits of the application." The result was that £48 was added to the sums already promised, and "their Lordships finally and absolutely declare their inability to depart from these terms, or to increase the grant now offered, which exceeds, in a very marked manner, the ordinary rate." The long letter from which this quotation is taken clearly indicates the force of conscience which Mr. Williams had brought to bear on the men in authority. He tried afterwards to get Lord John Russell to aid him in securing another £50, but all attempts failed. There was no use pleading poverty even, and the necessary forms had to be filled up and returned. Some of the answers given to the questions in the forms are worth quoting, both for their broken English and their common sense:

Q. "State the materials of which the external walls are built."

A. "Good strong stones from the bones of Snowdon."

Q. "State the height of the ceiling from the floor."

A. "No ceiling, for it is more airy without."

Q. "State in what manner the school is to be ventilated and warmed."

A. "In this locality we have enough, frequently more than we wish, of the Snowdonian pure and piercing air; the teacher can obtain plenty of it through the windows."

It is also stated that the site was presented gratis by Sir R. B. W. Bulkeley, M.P., Baron Hill, Anglesey. The local committee in sending their certificate had to beg the department's Secretary to forward the £150 as soon as possible, as

Mr. Harrison (Nanmor). Mr. H. P. Williams (Rhydd-du). Mr. R. E. Jones (Nant Gwynen). Mr. D. Jones (Bedd Gelert).
Rev. Griffith Owen (Bethania). Rev. W. J. Williams (Bedd Gelert).

Schoolmasters and Nonconformist Ministers.

parties were threatening them with an action at law for money due to them for materials.

This correspondence had just been closed when Lord John Russell visited Bedd Gelert, and stayed at the Goat Hotel. The first schoolmaster of the British School was Mr. Edward Morris, an acceptable Baptist preacher from Llanarmon yn Iâl. Being fairly conversant with English, John Jones got him to

write a letter to his Lordship, giving an epitome of the committee's struggles. John Jones and the schoolmaster were sent for, and after satisfying himself that the letter sent him had been written by the newly-appointed master, Lord Russell expressed his regret that the department could do nothing more for the school, adding that he would contribute £5 towards the funds, and that he would like to see the school next morning. The Prime Minister and his family spent an hour with the children next morning, catechising and addressing them in the homeliest fashion, not forgetting, on leaving, to praise the master's methods and efforts. As his Lordship was turning to go, John Jones put his hand on his shoulder, and handed him a pair of hand-knitted hose, from the black wool of a Snowdon sheep, remarking, "They will be very warm for you, my Lord, during the cold weather which is approaching. You are Britain's Prime Minister, and I am of the same political opinions as yourself, my Lord." The genial Peer smiled gracefully, and heartily thanked the giver for his present and kindly feelings. It is said that this incident was used on a public occasion by his Lordship to illustrate the heartiness of his reception in North Wales.

It was in the year 1855 the late Mr. George Thomas began his labours at Bedd Gelert. He was born near Newtown, and trained at Borough Road Normal College, London. He laboured faithfully and well at Bedd Gelert until the loss of voice forced resignation upon him in July 1892. His old pupils, many of whom fill important positions in life, remember him with deep respect; and a number of them, now living in America, sent him an album in 1888, containing their photographs, their names, and school-days' nicknames, being written on the front page. His declining days were cheered by a Government pension of £30, and a testimonial of a purse of gold from the inhabitants. The end came in April 1895. He was succeeded by Mr. E. R. Williams, now of Lleyn; and he has since been succeeded by Mr. D. Jones, late master of Nant Gwynen school.

The National School was opened January 1859 with a service in the church in the morning, and English concert in

the afternoon, under the presidency of the Dean of Bangor, and a Welsh concert, presided over by the late Ellis Owen, Esq., Cefn y Meusydd, in the evening. Owain Olaw and Glasynys were the leading spirits of the proceedings. The site was the joint gift of the late Mrs. Walker-Jones, the late John Casson, and Llewelyn Turner, Esqs. A keen competition was carried on between the two schools for twenty years, when the National School was finally closed in 1879. In 1871 a School Board was elected, and the deed transferring the British School to the Board was signed in January 1872. This Board extended its operations to Rhyd-ddu, and built a large school, with a master's house, in 1872, substituting thereby the old cottage school. Mr. Breese gave the Board a plot of land at Nanmor, and the school was built in the same year as Rhyd-ddu. Nant Gwynen was blessed the year following with a similar accommodation; and though the number of names on all the books does not exceed 160, the masters have found responsive materials for their best energies.

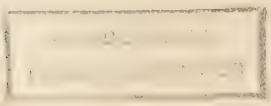
(*With Mr. O. M. Edwards's Permission.*)
The late Mr. George Thomas.

Nanmor had been dependent in the past on the efforts of John Jones, Hendre Fechan—an old-fashioned rudimentary, rendered a perfect cripple by rheumatism. He died about 1854, and the late Rev. Wm. Ellis re-opened the school in 1866, or 1867. Peniel Chapel House served as a schoolroom.

Two men whose names will ever be connected with Bedd Gelert are John Jones and John Roberts, Post Office, and a fact or two must be inserted here about them. The former hailed from Trawsfynydd, and had come to Nanmor as a weaver when about fifteen years of age. In the first years of his married life he suffered much from poverty, but he left Cae'r Bontbren, and took charge of the toll house, where his circumstances brightened. He was acting overseer for the

parish for a long period, a rate collector, and several other things. In his Monthly Meeting (or Presbytery) he was made much of, and was appointed to the task of arranging preaching tours through Carnarvonshire, in the days when the Calvinistic Methodists had no pastors, and all their ministers were itinerants. His strong will and fearlessness made him a man to be consulted by friends, and reckoned with by foes, and so naturally did he take the lead with everything that few disputed his position. He lived for religion and education. A reference is made to him in *Lizzie Milnes's Memoirs*, p. 219, where four verses of his poetry are translated. He died in February 1853, at seventy-six years of age.

The other name is that of the late Mr. John Roberts, Post Office. He was born at Bwlch Mwrchan, Nant Gwynen, and after marrying Miss Eliza Owen, Hafod Lwyfog, he settled as a shopkeeper in the village. He picked up the mantle of John Jones, and in addition to attending to his thriving business, he threw himself into public life. In nearly every movement he was sure to take a leading part, for which his power of speech, his clear-headedness, and his determined spirit qualified him. Very few could surpass him as narrator of anecdotes of his own parish, about which he knew almost everything, but never wrote a line. He passed away in October 1897, in his eighty-eighth year.

THE END

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